
FAREWELL TO CEO JON LEVETT

This month, NAFD Chief Executive Jon Levett steps down and moves on to new challenges in the agricultural sector. A somewhat turbulent four years - which has included a global pandemic and the arrival of two different external regulators in the profession as well as an imminent public inquiry into care of deceased people - Jon has built a wide network of contacts and colleagues inside and outside the funeral sector and here, a few of them share their experience of working with Jon.

Jon's departure will also be marked by events with the NAFD team at National Office and with members of the NAFD Executive. We wish you well Jon, we'll miss you!



I'd like to extend my personal thanks to Jon as he moves onto a new role. He has shown tremendous leadership and resilience at a time of the most significant change for the sector in a generation, but has also coupled this by leading his team at the NAFD to a new strategic vision in uncertain times. An accessible and thoughtful leader, Jon you, and your good humour, will be sorely missed by your peers, colleagues and wider stakeholders. You leave us with a legacy of improved relationships, through your influence and collaboration and - most importantly - improved outcomes for the bereaved. Our very best wishes in your future role and please, don't be a stranger."

Natalie McKail, Chair Independent Funeral Standards Organisation

I worked closely with Jon for three years and am really sorry to see him go. When I first arrived and asked about Jon, everyone said he was open, approachable and very supportive, all of which is true. But just as important, Jon had a clear vision for how he wanted the organisation to improve, a steely determination to make things better for members and consumers, and a huge capacity for hard work as he showed leading NAFD through the pandemic and building strong links with partners in Government and across the funeral sector. We wish him well in his new role. He can look back on his achievements with the Association with pride and I know he will be much missed."

Jonathan Rees, NAFD Independent Chair

Jon and I have enjoyed a warm and collaborative working partnership which has been paramount in the formation of the Deceased Management Advisory Group of which Jon's contribution was exemplary! We will miss him and extend our kindest wishes for the future."

Terry Tennens, Chief Executive of SAIF

It has been a pleasure working with Jon since the launch of the CMA's market investigation into the funerals sector in 2019. I believe that both the CMA and the NAFD have benefited from our collaborative working relationship. I wish him the best of luck in his future endeavours."

Dipesh Shah, Competition and Markets Authority

It seems as though Jon's tenure has been one of acronyms - CMA, IFSO, DMAG, FCA etc. He has met each challenge with tenacity and always with the best interests of the Association and its members in mind. There is no doubt that Jon, in his navigation through the pandemic, put the NAFD at the forefront of policy makers and opinion formers, something he should be incredibly proud of. On a personal note, I thank him for his support during my year in office and, as Jon wrote in the August edition of *Funeral Director Monthly*, "we have come a long way in four years". I endorse his thoughts and wish him every success in his new role."

Kate Edwards, NAFD Immediate Past President



JON
Chief
BBC





LEVETT
Executive National Association Of Funeral Directors
BREAKFAST 07:12



I have really enjoyed working alongside Jon during his time as Chief Executive of the NAFD. He has a naturally calm approach to all matters, even when dealing with a worldwide pandemic - in which I felt he was fundamental in supporting the entire funeral industry. He has always been very focused on progress in all areas, together as a team. I would describe Jon as a 'true leader'. He will be missed by all the team at NAFD, and the members, but Jon is leaving the Association in a very strong position to evolve and go forward again."

John Adams, NAFD President

It has been a genuine pleasure to work with Jon as part of DMAG. His contribution to the Group, and good humour, will be missed."

Wendy Buchan, The Cremation Society

I enjoyed a great year as President and supported Jon with his reforms within the governance of NAFD. We got on very well and I felt very confident with him leading the business. In March of 2020 though, he really entered his element when COVID kicked off. Jon's commitment to our work as funeral directors in obtaining the best possible outcomes from the Government, and collaborative approach with our kindred organisations, really brought a sense of solidarity for all of us. He also supported the NAFD team to adapt to new ways of working too amongst a whirlwind of meetings and briefings. An absolute gem, we have been very lucky to have him."

David Barrington, NAFD Past President

Jon was great to work with on DMAG; he brought calm, intelligence and rational thinking to the table, mixed with a wry sense of humour."

Julie Dunk, Institute of Cemetery and Crematorium Management

I think my favourite anecdote relates to an occasion in March 2020 during the COVID-19 pandemic when the crisis in PPE supply came to the fore. Jon and I were asked by the Department for Health and Social Care to submit a formal request for PPE that the funeral sector would require to see it through the coming months. We submitted a request for 50,000 body bags, 33,000 containers of disinfectant wipes, 200,000 disposable gloves, 10,000 bottles of hand sanitiser, 200,000 eye protectors, 200,000 aprons, 200,000 FFP3 face masks and 200,000 gowns. The look on Jon's face was priceless when we realised that, if our submission was successful, all of this might be delivered to NAFD offices in Solihull for Jon to distribute. In the end it all went out through the Local Resilience Forums and we all know how that went. Maybe we'd have been better off with Jon touring the country in his car dropping off PPE to funeral directors on the way!"

Jeremy Field OBE, NAFD Past President

Jon's insight from his very earliest days in the role as to the directions we needed to move in were much appreciated. Many future officers will be grateful to him for the structural changes we have made under his guidance which have removed personal liabilities from them. I have appreciated Jon's foresight and willingness to work collaboratively, as this has helped the organisation to prepare for challenges and be proactive. There is no doubt that, under his tenure, the NAFD has changed and developed and we can look forward with positivity."

Abi Pattenden, NAFD Past President

I joined the NAFD a few months after Jon and remember our first event that we delivered for the Association, the AGM and Conference.

With Jon's support and focus on progression for the Association we worked together on a portfolio of events, from delivering the Five-Year strategy to the CMA, FCA and DMAG and having to consider how we could deliver the events during the pandemic. Jon was always supportive and open to new suggestions and was fundamental in helping the NAFD events be the success that they were.

I'd like to thank him for his support during the past four years. With Jon's visions for the NAFD he made my job easier, and I feel very fortunate to have worked alongside him.

I wish Jon every success in his new role and know that the agricultural sector will be very fortunate to have him on board."

Jane Lawrence, NAFD Event Operations Manager