



## **Funeral For Devizes Canal Tragedy Man Packed With Family And Friends**

Friends and family of Devizes man Mark Stobbart packed out St James' Church for his funeral service led by the Rev Johnathan Triffitt.

The body of Mr Stobbart, 44, was found in the Kennet and Avon Canal in Devizes on the morning of Good Friday, shortly before the Devizes to Westminster canoe race was due to start.

Mr Triffitt said the attendance was a tribute to Mr Stobbart and he acknowledged that many people would still be feeling shock and disbelief following the tragedy.

Mr Stobbart, a key broker account executive for insurance firm Ageas, lived on the Quakers Walk estate with his wife Clare and his three-year-old son Conor.

During the service friends and family were given time to reflect on their memories of him, and his niece Chloe read a poem by David Harkins.

It said: "You can shed tears that he is gone, or you can smile because he has lived. You can close your eyes and pray that he'll come back, or you can open your eyes and see all he's left."

Mr Triffitt said Mr Stobbart was devoted to his family. He said: "I suspect if you asked him what his greatest achievement was it wouldn't be climbing Mount Everest or crossing the finishing line of a marathon, it would be meeting and marrying Clare and raising Conor."

Mr Stobbart's family chose traditional organ music to accompany his coffin, decorated with white roses, in and out of the church.

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