

A Guide To Family Managed Funerals

Funeral or burial services can be organised without the involvement of a funeral director or a minister.

When Death Occurs

When a death takes place at home, the last General Practitioner (GP) to have visited the deceased should be told. They confirm the death and issue a certificate stating the cause of death. This may not be issued straight away and will need to be collected from the doctor's surgery.

If the death occurs while the deceased is in hospital then the hospital will provide the certificate.

Tell the doctor or hospital at this stage if the deceased will be cremated, so that another certificate authorising cremation can be given at the same time. It will be possible to arrange for this certificate to be issued later.

If the doctor is unable to confirm the cause of death he will inform the coroner.

Registering A Death

It is a legal requirement that a death is registered by the Registrar of Births and Deaths in the district in which death occurs.

Registration should be made within five days of the death usually by a close relative or someone who has been given the responsibility by the deceased to make the arrangements, e.g. an executor. You should telephone the registrar to make an appointment so that you are seen as soon as possible.

When registering the death you will need to take the medical certificate of cause of death and the deceased's medical card, if available.

In some cases a death may be reported to the coroner. It may simply be that a doctor has not seen the deceased within a specific time period before death but this should not delay the funeral. If the coroner is involved, he will decide whether or not an inquest will be held. If an inquest is not held, you can register the death only when the coroner has confirmed the cause of death to the registrar. If an inquest is to be held, the Coroner will register the death. This may delay the funeral arrangements.

Funeral Arrangements

When it's been decided that the deceased is to be buried or cremated, an appointment should be made at either the crematorium or cemetery office.

We will help you with any documentation needed and discuss the options available and the charges involved. You will be able to reserve a time for a ceremony in the crematorium or cemetery chapel and/or a graveside service. There are charges for the different types of grave and facilities and these must be paid before a burial can take place. Further help with expenses is available from the Benefits Agency of the Department of Social Security.

Family and friends can choose their own personal funeral service with readings, poems, eulogies, songs and music. At the crematorium there is an organ or a facility for CDs to be played and there is a facility for CDs to be played in Keele Community Room.

Forms And Certification

For a Burial

At least two working days notice should be given to the cemetery staff before an interment can take place. A Notice of Interment Form should be completed and returned with the Disposal Certificate (issued by the registrar or coroner) together with the charges to the cemetery office at least 24 hours before the interment.

For a Cremation

There are forms to be completed by law before a cremation can take place, they are:

Cremation 1 – Application for Cremation
Information regarding Disposal of Cremated Remains
Forms 4 and 5 Medical Certificates

Other forms to be completed:-

Notice of Cremation

Information Regarding the Disposal of Remains

All forms will be supplied by the Crematorium Office. The completed forms along with the Disposal Certificate (either issued by the Registrar or Coroner) must be returned to the Crematorium Office at least 48 hours before the cremation.

The Coffin

The coffin must be made of wood or a wood bi-product with a nameplate stating the name and age of the deceased fixed to the lid. For cremation the coffin and its fittings, both inside and outside, must be easily combustible materials that don't give out smoke or toxic gases. Full details of all requirements will be given to you at the time of booking. A list of suppliers of biodegradable coffins is available on request.

Vehicle And Pallbearer Arrangements

If a hearse is not going to be used, a suitable vehicle is needed to bring the coffin in a dignified manner to the crematorium or cemetery. It is important to make sure that the funeral party arrive promptly at the arranged time and that enough pallbearers are there and fully aware of what they need to do.

At both the crematorium and the cemetery the ceremonies will be under the control of the staff.

After The Funeral

After the burial has taken place flowers and floral tributes can be left at the crematorium or on the grave at the cemetery.

Cremated remains can be buried in the crematorium or cemetery grounds or taken away for disposal elsewhere.

There are different types of memorials available. In cemeteries a memorial may be erected on the grave. All memorials at both sites are restricted to a minimum and maximum size.

The crematorium and cemetery staff will help you with all funeral and burial arrangements.