

# Arranging a funeral *for your loved one*

Helping you every step of the way



  
**Dignity**<sup>®</sup>  
CARING FUNERAL  
SERVICES



## About this brochure

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We're here to help you arrange the funeral you want for your loved one and this brochure explains the decisions you have to make, and is a guide to some of the things you may need to think about when planning the service.

We're always available to discuss any decisions with you and our funeral directors are here to help and advise you in your time of need, 24 hours a day, every day of the year.

## “We’re here to help you with *advice and guidance.*”

We take you through the things you need to know about arranging a funeral for your loved one:

Arranging a funeral can feel like a daunting task especially given the emotional stress many people are under when a loved one dies. We’re here to help you from the moment you need us through every step of the way.

You can expect us to:

- Give you advice and information on all details from registering the death to the things that you need to consider after the funeral;
- Respect and look after the person who has died;
- Help you with any special requests;
- Provide information about any local regulations;
- Make arrangements, on your behalf, with other people such as the crematorium or local cemetery;
- Give you advice on flowers, donations to charities, newspaper announcements, stationery and memorials;
- Provide a fully itemised estimate of our costs; and
- Be there on the day of the funeral to take care of all the arrangements. You can contact one of our trained, professional members of staff 24 hours a day, seven days a week.



### How we can help

We are here to help you arrange the funeral you want for your loved one and our staff are always on hand to guide you every step of the way.

“We take you through the *initial steps* after a bereavement.”

## When someone dies

It is usual for people to be unsure of what to do in the immediate aftermath of a bereavement. We take you through the initial steps and provide advice on other things you may need to think about when someone you know dies.

### Registering a death

In most cases you will need to register the death within five days and it is best to visit the register office in the area in which the person died. This will help avoid delays getting the necessary documents. The following people can register a death:

- Any relative of the person who has died
- Any person present at the death
- A person who lives in the house where the person died
- The person arranging the funeral, but not a funeral director.

To register the death you need to have a simple interview with the registrar at the register office. You will need to give the registrar:

- The full name of the person who has died
- Their full address
- Their date of birth
- Details of where and when the person died
- Their occupation (if any).

If the person who has died is a married woman, you will need to give her maiden name and her husband's full name and occupation.

### Documentation and certification

You will need to give the registrar:

- Certificate of Cause of Death (signed by a doctor).

You should also bring the following documents where applicable:

- Birth Certificate
- Marriage/Civil Partnership Certificates
- NHS Medical Card.

At the register office the registrar will issue you with:

- A Certificate for Burial or Cremation (known as a green form), which you should give to your funeral director as soon as possible.
- A Certificate of Registration of Death, which you should fill in and send to the social security office for the area where the person died.

You can buy copies of the Death Certificate (sometimes known as the Entry of Death form) from the registrar for a small fee, which varies from region to region. You will need these for official purposes such as closing bank accounts and pension schemes.



### What if the coroner is involved?

Under certain circumstances the death must be reported by the doctor, hospital or registrar to the coroner (England and Wales) or procurator fiscal (Scotland).

This means that there will be a post mortem or inquest and you may have to delay your plans for the funeral.

In this case there will be no Cause of Death Certificate. The death will be registered once the coroner has made a decision. The time this takes will vary.

### Caring for the deceased ~ looking after your loved one

Once you have entrusted the deceased to us we will take care of them with respect and professionalism. Your loved one will be taken from their place of death to our specialist mortuary before being transported by private ambulance to the local funeral home. If you prefer they can rest at home or in church, if this is allowed.

We are able to provide an embalming service if required. Embalming delays the natural processes that take place after death and whilst not essential we think it is an important consideration if you want to visit the person in the chapel of rest. We wash and dress everyone in our care and some people like to provide us with items such as a favourite outfit.

Our funeral directors will carry out your wishes carefully and respectfully but, if you would like to help us look after your loved one, please let us know.

### Spending time with the deceased

Some people find it helps to spend time with the person who has died and like to bring a small gift or photograph to put in the coffin. Others find it upsetting to see someone they loved who is now dead. It's a personal choice and we can talk this through with you.

### Telling others about the death

You may want to put an announcement in a local or national newspaper to tell people about the death and the details of the funeral. We can help you with drafting and sending a death announcement to a newspaper.

After the funeral you can also place a thank you message in a newspaper to thank those who attended and sent donations or flowers. We can keep copies for you and laminate them to protect them.





## Arranging the funeral service

The funeral service is a way of saying goodbye to someone who has died. We are here to take you through the decisions you need to make to ensure you can arrange the funeral you want for your loved one.

### Following the wishes of the deceased

If the person who has died had a funeral plan, their instructions for the funeral will be recorded and you will need to provide us with the policy number and details. Or they may have put their wishes in their will or talked to someone about what they would like. If you don't have any clear idea of what the person wanted, you will need to choose between a burial or a cremation.

### Choosing between cremation or burial

The first choice people usually make is about the type of funeral service that will take place. Whether you choose a burial or a cremation, we'll be there to make all the arrangements on your behalf.

#### Some things to consider about a cremation:

- It can cost less than a burial
- The funeral service can be held at the crematorium. Most will have a service room or other appropriate facilities.
- The service may also take place in a church or another location before going to the crematorium.
- There will be a strict time limit for the length of the service. This will vary depending on the crematorium.
- You will need to decide the final resting place of the ashes. You can keep the ashes in an urn, scatter or bury them.

#### Some things to consider about a burial:

- You may already have a family grave or plot. We can arrange for this to be reopened and the headstone removed before burial.
- In some areas, burial space may be limited or may be very expensive.
- You might want to reserve plots or a large plot if you or your family want to be buried close by.
- Woodland burials are now available in many areas in the country. See page 9 for more details.
- You can hold the funeral service in a local church or in a cemetery chapel. Some funeral directors have a room you can use for a service if you prefer.
- After the burial you will need to consider if you want a memorial headstone, or a new inscription on an existing headstone.

We can also give you advice on choosing a memorial and any local regulations you should know about.

### Simple Funeral Option

We also offer a Simple Funeral Option, which provides a limited, economic service. The cost of the option includes:

- bringing the person who has died into our care during office hours (within ten miles);
- looking after the person who has died and arranging a simple funeral;
- providing a hearse and staff to go to the nearest crematorium or cemetery;
- providing a simple coffin; and
- a funeral service to take place at a time to suit us.

*Please note this option does not include embalming, spending time with the person who has died in a chapel of rest or providing additional cars.*

# “We’re here to help you arrange the funeral you want for *your loved one.*”

## Choosing a coffin, casket or urn

You will need to decide the type of coffin, casket, or urn you want. We have a brochure with a range of coffins, caskets and urns and we can discuss this with you when you make the arrangements.



### Choosing a coffin, casket or urn brochure

You can obtain a copy of our Choosing a coffin, casket or urn brochure from your local funeral director and it is also available to download from our website: [www.dignityfunerals.co.uk](http://www.dignityfunerals.co.uk).

## Information we need to arrange the funeral

In order to make the funeral arrangements the funeral director will need:

- The full name of the person who has died
- Their full address
- Their date of birth
- Details of where and when they died
- Confirmation of whether the person who has died had a pacemaker fitted. Pacemakers must be removed before the cremation.

## Arranging the funeral service

Funerals are often based around family traditions or religious preferences. Many people try to make funerals more personal to reflect the life of their loved one.

The service can include anything you feel appropriate. Below we’ve listed the main things people usually consider when arranging a funeral service, but you should choose what is appropriate for you and the person who has died.

### Some things to consider:

- Where will the service be held, on what day and at what time?
- Who will lead the service?
- What would you like to be said and who by?
- Would you like music?
- Would you like flowers?
- Would you like an order of service?
- Do you want an announcement in a newspaper?
- What transport arrangements do you want?
- Are there any special arrangements you would like us to make?

When you have decided what you would like, we will tell you all the costs in a written estimate and then make all the arrangements for you.

## Arranging the funeral service continued

“We know that for our *clients* every detail is important.”

### Meeting your needs

A funeral service is a very personal event and people often have different requirements. We will do everything we can to ensure that your needs are met and that you can arrange the funeral you want for a loved one.

### Where will the service be held, on what day and what time?

A funeral service can be held in any suitable venue. Many people choose to have the service in a church or crematorium chapel. The service can include anything you feel appropriate. If you choose a religious service the minister will say what you can and cannot do. You can also hold the service in a private home or a public room such as a village hall. Please tell us if there is any time or day that does not suit you.

### Who will lead the service?

Many funerals are held in a church and the minister will say what you can and cannot do in their church. It is usual for the minister of that church to lead the service unless they allow someone else to.

If you want to hold the service at the crematorium and would like a religious service, your local minister will be able to lead the service there for you. You can also use the crematorium chapel to hold a service that is not religious.

In theory, anyone can lead a funeral service. It could be a religious minister, a nonreligious minister such as a humanist, the funeral director or a friend or relative.

### What would you like to be said and who by?

Many services include some readings and prayers. The person leading the service or a close friend will often say something about the person who has died. You can include poetry and passages, and friends and family can take part. If the person delivering the main tribute has never met the person who has died, make sure they know some personal details, especially the name they were known by.

### Would you like music?

People are increasingly choosing to include elements in the funeral service that reflect the life of the person who has died, and it is now quite common to incorporate favourite musical compositions, both classical and contemporary, as part of the funeral.

Music often brings great comfort to mourners at a funeral and we can provide practical advice on playing music at a funeral and offer a list of popular choices.

### Some things to consider:

Almost any music can be played at the funeral as long as copyright restrictions do not apply. Commonly, people choose hymns or play a CD of a favourite song or piece of music. There may sometimes be live music. We recommend you discuss the choice of music with whoever is leading the ceremony as their views may have to be taken into account.

We can help you to source music, but if you prefer to have an organist you should ensure that they are able to play any particular hymns or songs that you have chosen. You may also want a choir at the service, just let us know and we can arrange this with the church or crematorium.





## Would you like flowers?

Many people choose flowers that were a favourite of the person who has died. This is another way of making the funeral more personal. There are so many types of floral arrangements, and we have a brochure you can take away to help you decide.

Some people choose to have flowers from the family only and choose an organisation for people to give a donation to. It is worth remembering that sending flowers can be a healing gesture for people who have lost someone close. Therefore it might be worth giving people the choice of sending flowers or donating money to a charity, or both.

We will collect the cards from the wreaths and bouquets and give them to you later if you want. We can also collect donations for you, and record who they are from.

## Would you like an order of service?

You may like to provide an order of service. These are helpful for mourners and can be sent to people who can't make the service. An order of service includes the hymns or songs, readings and anything else you would like. You could also place small attendance cards on the seats for mourners to fill in so you know who was there.

After the funeral we can print thank you cards for you to send to people who gave flowers and donations.



## Choosing flowers & floral tributes *brochure*

You can obtain a copy of our Choosing flowers & floral tributes brochure from your local funeral director and it is also available to download from our website: [www.dignityfunerals.co.uk](http://www.dignityfunerals.co.uk).

## Arranging the funeral service continued

“We conduct every funeral with *compassion and dignity.*”

### Would you like an announcement in the newspapers?

You may want to put an announcement in a local or national newspaper to tell people about the death and the details of the funeral. After the funeral you can also place a thank you message in a newspaper to thank the people who attended and sent donations and flowers. We can keep copies for you and laminate them to protect them.

### What transport arrangements would you like?

On the day of the funeral, the hearse will take the coffin to the funeral service. The hearse is usually followed by limousines which carry the chief mourners. We have chauffeured limousines that save you worrying about parking, driving and getting to the service on time.

Please let us know if there is a special route you would like the procession to take. We can discuss this with you when you make the arrangements.

### Are there any other special arrangements you would like us to make?

You may want to think about other ways of making the funeral reflect the life of the person who has died. People sometimes like to include elements that will add a special touch to the funeral service.

Some of the things people choose include horse-drawn hearses and releasing doves at the crematorium or at the grave. We will do our best to arrange anything we can for you.

### Some things to consider:

#### Horse-drawn hearses

For those seeking a more traditional style of funeral, a horse-drawn hearse may be arranged. Driven by experienced coachmen, this is the perfect choice for those who wish the service to reflect the dignity of a bygone age. The horses are presented to a high standard, complete with a leather harness, traditional collar and plumes.

#### Releasing white doves

The release of white doves at funerals and memorial services is an increasingly popular way of adding that special touch to a funeral ceremony.

The gesture helps to begin the grieving process of letting go and is sure to live on in the memories of all who attend the service. The trained white birds soar into the sky, usually circling a number of times in a group, before returning to their home lofts at distances up to several hundred miles away.

#### Motorcycle funerals

Motorcycle funerals honour and acknowledge the passion that motorcycle enthusiasts enjoyed in life and demonstrate respect for all bikers.

A motorcycle hearse is an entirely appropriate means of transport for those whose passion in life was motorcycles and is a dignified way of showing that your loved one had character, style, energy and individuality.

A motorcycle funeral is suitable for all bikers or ex-bikers and may encourage happy memories of youthful days, holidays or day trips that aid the mourning process.



### Additional limousines

For your convenience and comfort, additional limousines can be arranged should you wish. Our modern fleet of vehicles is regularly updated and specifically designed for use by the funeral profession.

### Woodland burials

Woodland burials offer an environmentally friendly alternative to traditional funerals at crematoria and cemeteries.

Woodland burials are becoming popular and your funeral director will be able to tell you the location of your nearest woodland burial site. A range of eco-friendly, biodegradable coffins are available for this type of service.

The environment of woodland burial grounds is kept as natural as possible. Memorials and headstones are not usually permitted but often trees can be planted to mark the grave.

Your funeral director will be able to provide further information on woodland burials and the range of eco-coffins available.

### Asian funerals

We can arrange funerals for all cultures and religions at any of our funeral locations across the UK. Additionally, our Asian Funeral Directors in Birmingham, London and Leicester offer a specialist service for the needs of Asian families.





## The day of the funeral



There is no set procedure for a funeral but traditionally the funeral procession starts at the house of the person who has died – or sometimes the hospital or funeral home – with the coffin and cars travelling to the place where the funeral service will take place. The hearse sometimes goes straight to the service and mourners meet there.

The coffin is taken into where the funeral service is to be held and close family members usually follow and sit at the front. For a burial, the coffin will be taken to the grave and lowered into the grave while a short service is held.

For a cremation, the coffin will be taken to the crematorium and placed on a stand. Towards the end of the service music is played and traditionally the coffin disappears from view. If you want the coffin to remain on view until after the mourners have left, please tell the funeral director.

Remember that there will be a time limit for the service. You can book more time at the crematorium if you like, although this may cost extra. Your funeral director can advise on times and costs.

After the funeral, friends and family usually get together for some refreshments, which often takes place at the deceased's house, the house of a close family member or at a local pub or hotel.

“We provide you with  
*support after*  
the funeral.”

## After the funeral

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Once the funeral is over there may still be some things you will need to organise. Your Dignity funeral director will call you a few days after the funeral to see if there is anything else we can help you with.

We have a range of helpful leaflets on coming to terms with a death and we can put you in touch with local counselling services and support groups.

### Stopping junk mail

Many people find it distressing when junk mail addressed to the person who has died continues to arrive. As part of our service we pass information to a company which specialises in preventing junk mail from being sent to someone who has died.

### Paying for the funeral

Once we have made the funeral arrangements and agreed a date for the service, we will give you written confirmation of the arrangements. We will itemise our costs and an estimate of the payments we will make to others (such as the minister, florist, newspaper, crematorium or cemetery) on your behalf.

You can pay the bill in full when you make the arrangements and we do ask for a minimum payment to cover at least the payments we make to others for you. Any payments you make will be taken off the final bill, which we will send you seven days after the funeral. You must pay the final bill as soon as you receive it.

### Help with the cost of the funeral

If you receive benefits you may be eligible for financial help towards the cost of the funeral. For more information, contact the local benefits agency in the phone book or visit the website at [www.dwp.gov.uk](http://www.dwp.gov.uk)

### Providing the highest standards of service

We want to make sure that families continue to receive the highest standards of service from us. About three weeks after the funeral we would like to send you a survey asking for your opinions about the service we provided. When we make the funeral arrangements with you, we will ask you if you are happy to receive this survey.





## Memorials ~ Creating a lasting memory

Memorials are a way to remember our loved ones and can range from headstones at a grave to a simple flower in a garden of remembrance. Memorials provide comfort for many people, giving them a place to visit to remember the person who has died. When choosing a memorial it is important that you have time to reflect on your decision and understand the different regulations that may affect your choice.

If the person who has died has been buried, you may want to think of a memorial gravestone. If it is a family grave, you may want to have a new inscription, or replace the memorial if it is damaged.

Different cemeteries have different rules about when a gravestone may be put up and may insist on waiting at least six months for the ground to settle before the stone can be put in place. We can help you and we have a range of memorials we can show you.

If the person has been cremated, there are often a range of memorials available at the local crematorium's garden of remembrance. You may choose to have the ashes buried in a churchyard or cemetery. Some people scatter or bury their loved one's ashes in a particular spot in the garden or a place they loved, or even on football pitches or at sea.

If you do not own the place where you want the ashes to be scattered, you will need permission from the landowner or relevant authority.

We have a brochure with a range of ashes containers and urns and we can show you a number of different options available to keep the ashes in at home. Please ask us if this is something you would like to consider.

There is no need to make a decision straight away about the memorial. We are always available after the funeral for you to talk to and provide any advice or information to help you decide.

If you would like further help and advice about memorials, please contact your local Dignity funeral director.





# “Helping you *every step of the way.*”

## The Dignity promise

Every Dignity funeral director is rigorously monitored to ensure that its client service, premises and vehicles are of the highest standard. By choosing a Dignity funeral director you can be confident that:

### We are compassionate and caring:

- We never forget that this is one of the worst times in someone’s life. We always treat people with compassion, respect and care.

### We are open, honest and straightforward:

- We help our clients by providing clear and straightforward information that enables them to make informed choices. We are transparent about our fees and there are no hidden extras.

### We spend as much time as the client needs:

- We spend as much time with our clients as they need, whether it’s when they first contact us, during the arrangements for the service, or choosing a memorial or funeral plan.

### We pay attention to detail:

- We know that for our clients every detail is important. We take care and time to make sure we get every detail right.

### We keep in contact:

- We keep in regular contact with our clients. They always understand what is happening; who is looking after them and they are confident that we understand their wishes.

## Dignity ~ The ultimate funeral professionals

Dignity is a British company that has funeral homes in towns and cities across the UK. We strive to set the highest standards for the funeral profession in terms of client service and care for the deceased.

At Dignity we are funeral people – it’s all we do. Dignity funeral directors have a rich heritage. Our oldest funeral home was established in 1812 and the majority of our businesses have been serving their local community for generations.

Our funeral directors and arrangers come from the cities and towns they serve or families that have been in the funeral profession for generations. This means they understand local traditions and can help our clients every step of the way from registering the death to explaining all the options so that families can have the service they want for their loved one.

A Dignity funeral director provides a complete service and there are no hidden extras. We are completely transparent about our pricing, providing a price list and written quotation for each client at the time the funeral is arranged, so you know exactly how much the funeral will cost.

By choosing a Dignity funeral director you can be sure that you are choosing the ultimate funeral professionals.

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## Dignity contact information

If you would like to find out more about Dignity or to find your local Dignity branch please visit; [www.dignityfunerals.co.uk](http://www.dignityfunerals.co.uk).

Or write to:

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