

Funeral wishes – topics to talk about

Below are a range of topics someone might want to think about when recording their funeral wishes. It is just a starting point and you may want to add to it. It would be helpful for people to write down their wishes and why they made a particular wish, such as what they want to be buried in, in case it is queried after their death. Once completed, everyone should make sure their wishes are kept in a safe place and have talked them through with people who are close to them (or at least told them where to find them).

Planning the ceremony

- Do you want a funeral service? If so, what type of service do you want, a religious or non-religious ceremony?
- What would you like everyone to wear, your favourite colour, your football team's colours?
- Is there special music or a song you would like to be played at the ceremony?
- Would you like any particular photographs of you to be on display?
- Who would you like the service to be led by? Have you asked this person in advance, or told someone close you'd like this to be?
- Who would you like to give the main address?
- What poetry or readings would you like to be read at the ceremony and who would you like to read them? Remember you can also leave these choices to those close to you as they may like to choose their own readings which reflect their relationship with you?
- Would you like close friends to speak about you or tell a favourite story, if so who?
- Would you like everyone to be given a memento when they leave, such as a sprig of rosemary, the emblem of remembrance?
- Who would you like to attend? Just close family and friends or all comers?

- Do you want flowers, if so what ones?
- Would you also or instead want donations, if so to which charity?

Deciding on burial or cremation

- Are there any particular clothes you would like to be buried or cremated in?
- Are there any mementos or personal jewellery that you would like to be buried with you?
- What type of coffin would you like to have?
- Do you want to be buried, if so where?
- Do you want to be cremated, if so where?
- Would you like the service to be held at the crematorium or elsewhere?
- Where would you like your ashes to be scattered?
- Do you want a gravestone, a tree planted or another marker, if so what?
- Do you want to donate your body for medical research?

<https://www.hta.gov.uk/donating-your-body>

Planning a commemoration?

- Do you want a party afterwards? If so, what form would you like it to take – location, food, drinks, etc?
- Do you have any other wishes for your send-off which you would like people to know?

Finding a local funeral director

If you don't know a local funeral director, contact the National Association of Funeral Directors (www.nafd.org.uk or 0121 711 1343) or the National Society of Allied and Independent Funeral Directors (www.saif.org.uk or 0345 230 6777)

Other Useful Information

Department for Work & Pensions – Funeral Payments for those on low income
<https://www.gov.uk/funeral-payments>

Fair Funerals Campaign
<http://fairfuneralscampaign.org.uk/>