

Funerals as unique as the individual

This guide is designed to highlight the breadth and range of choices available to ensure that the funeral is as unique as the individual.

When it comes to funerals, much of the protocol of days gone by has been swept away, which means that opportunities now exist to make the arrangements truly unique. That's why we offer completely bespoke funeral services.

We are all individuals, so many of us wish to make the funeral as personal an occasion as possible. There are many ways in which the funeral arrangements can reflect and celebrate the life which your loved one has lived.

In addition to the more familiar choices, such as between burial and cremation, you now have the option to personalise other elements of the arrangements. You can read about just a few of them below, but we are always very receptive to discussing other possibilities and available choices with you.

It is important to remember that making a funeral personal doesn't have to involve lots of additional expense. It can be something as simple as choosing flowers which were a favourite of your loved one and selecting music for the ceremony which was special to them. Many people find that involving family members and close friends in the ceremony by giving the readings, or simply saying a few words and sharing a few memories, make it much more of a personal occasion.

Many people prefer funerals to be celebrations of the lives of those who have died. Religious faith has not always formed a part of these lives. In addition to more traditional funerals, other alternative services are available.

Humanist funerals – a Humanist service does not recognise an 'after life'. It focuses instead upon the life and experiences of the person who has died. For this reason, Humanist funerals are often considered appropriate those who have led secular lives.

Civil funerals – these too may be appropriate for those for whom religion has not played a central role. They offer the opportunity to create a personal service that reflects the life and wishes of your loved one, but it is also possible to incorporate some aspects of religious origin, such as readings or a particular hymn. We suggest, however, that if the religious content of the funeral extends beyond one hymn and prayer, a religious minister should be considered.

Family funerals – a family funeral allows those closest to the person who has died to create their own service, with members of the family having more involvement and the inclusion of elements from across the spectrum. If you need assistance or guidance with the design and construction of the service, we are here to help.

Locations - there is no rule which says that the funeral service must take place in a church, other place of worship or crematorium. The choice of location is yours and may include hotels, sports halls, village halls or other venues.

Vehicles - another area in which options to reflect the personality or lifestyle of your loved one are available is transportation. As an alternative to the traditional black motor hearse we are also able to offer hearses in white

or pink, a motorcycle hearse and hearses adapted from a Volkswagen Beetle, vintage lorry and 4x4. In addition, we can arrange a horse drawn hearse through our association with a number of livery stables and carriage masters, who provide the hearse and horses. Traditionally, the hearse leads the funeral cortege with the family and chief mourners following in our fleet of limousines, but if you prefer, it is also possible for a second horse-drawn carriage to follow on behind.

Finally, if burial has been selected, you may have a number of choices available to you in terms of location. As well as the possibility of a natural woodland site, some cemeteries are now making available mausoleum chambers. A sea burial may be an appropriate option for someone who has had sea-faring connections during their lifetime. Burials at sea are subject to Government regulation, which means that locations are limited principally to the English Channel off Newhaven and to the west of The Needles off the Dorset coast.

