

CHOOSING A FUNERAL

A guide to help you create the right
commemoration for you and your loved one



“Every funeral is as unique as the life being celebrated. Here we share our decades of experience and local knowledge to help you craft a fitting tribute to your loved one”

– Simon and Rebecca Welham

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“I just wanted to express our gratitude on the way your company managed our father’s funeral prior to and including today’s service. They were so warm, courteous and professional with us. We are very grateful for this as we were pretty clueless on how to arrange everything, and their kindness really helped. Please pass on our thoughts and gratitude to them.” - (Family A&C)

PLAN YOUR FUNERAL

Whether you are pre-planning your own funeral or planning a funeral for your loved one, there are several things that you will need to think about. Do remember though, that a funeral is for those left behind and often provides closure. You can craft a completely bespoke funeral or choose from our funeral packages.

KEY THINGS TO CONSIDER:

Attended or unattended

A simple burial or cremation without mourners, or a service with mourners where people can pay their last respects.

Burial or cremation

The decision on whether you wish to be buried or cremated - can be influenced by factors like cost and religious beliefs.

Type of service

Religious or non-religious? Traditional, modern or eco-friendly?

Officiant

Whether you want a religious or secular service; will you ask a minister of religion or celebrant to officiate?

Location

Church, cemetery, crematorium or woodland burial site?

Coffins and caskets

Traditional, green or personalised?

Finishing touches

Music, stationery, floral tributes, visual tribute, webcasts, specialist vehicles and personal items.

Wake arrangements

Venue and catering arrangements.

What to do with the cremated remains

You will need to consider what to do with the cremated remains after the cremation.

Memorials and memorabilia

Select from a wide range of memorials, urns, headstones and plaques .

You can find out more about each of these on our website,
www.welhamjones.co.uk/help-advice

WHICH FUNERAL SERVICE IS RIGHT FOR YOU?

Whether you opt for a Christian or other faith service, a Humanist or a Secular funeral will most likely depend on your wishes or those of the deceased.

Whatever you choose, we will work with you to ensure it is a fitting tribute to you or your loved one. This guide to the different types of funeral services will help you create the right commemoration for you or your loved one.

CHRISTIAN FUNERALS

Christian funerals are the most common religious funerals in the UK, whether Anglican, Roman Catholic or non-conformist.

Your priest will determine a framework for the service, which will be drawn from the agreed formats of the Christian Churches in England. Venues include places of worship, crematoria chapels, cemetery chapels and graveside. As the service is one of remembrance, some family input is generally required and a Christian committal will be given.

OTHER RELIGIOUS FUNERALS

We support funerals for a wide range of religious and cultural traditions, including Buddhist, Hindu, Jewish, Muslim, Sikh, and other faiths. Each tradition has its own customs and rites, which may include specific prayers, readings, rituals, or burial practices.

Religious leaders or family elders usually guide the service, ensuring it aligns with faith traditions. Venues vary depending on the beliefs and preferences of the family and may include places of worship, crematoria, cemeteries, or other meaningful locations.

Some faiths require specific rites, such as ritual washing, prayers at the graveside, or swift burial. We can provide guidance and support to help families honour these traditions while making necessary arrangements.

NON-RELIGIOUS, SECULAR OR HUMANIST FUNERALS

These funerals are an increasingly popular alternative for those who were not religious and are often referred to as person-centred funerals.

A celebrant will write and lead the service for you and they will help define a framework, within which the service takes place. Venues for secular funerals include crematoria chapels, cemetery chapels, village halls, graveside and woodland burial sites, but not churches or other places of worship. As a secular service is one of remembrance and celebration, greater family input is generally required, including that of children where appropriate.

ECO-FRIENDLY FUNERALS

A 'greener' funeral aims to reduce the impact that managing and delivering a funeral, be it a burial or cremation, has on the environment.

Changing attitudes towards sustainability mean that the funeral industry is adopting more eco-friendly methods and products to meet changing demand, which makes them increasingly attractive.

The location of a burial might also be different, for example you could choose a special woodland area and plant a tree instead of a headstone, helping to minimise your loved one's lasting imprint on the environment.

BURIAL AT SEA

No longer just applicable for naval personnel or sailors, Welham Jones can arrange a burial at sea for your loved one, if desired.

OFFICIANTS

If you know the type of service you want but do not know anyone to officiate, we can introduce someone suitable. Theoretically, anyone can take a funeral service, but that can limit the venues available.

DECIDING BETWEEN A BURIAL OR A CREMATION

Your Welham Jones funeral arranger will guide you through the arrangements for both types of funerals, and help you decide between them if the deceased did not specify which they would prefer.

Choosing between a burial or cremation may depend on your religious or personal beliefs or those of the deceased. Judaism, the Greek Orthodox Church and Islam do not allow cremation.

Cremation is often a more affordable option than burial and therefore more common, due to the shortage of burial space available. If the person who has died lived in a parish with an open churchyard (Anglican), then they have a right, no matter their religion or beliefs, to be buried there, which often be a more cost effective option. Your funeral arranger can advise on these and other local costs.

There are several other factors you might wish to consider, which we have outlined on the following pages.

BURIALS: WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

THE SERVICE

You can choose to have no service at all (unattended) or to have a burial service (attended). If you decide upon a service, then these will often be:

- About 40-45 minutes long,
- Religious or non-religious,
- Held in the crematorium chapel, separately in a church, in a cemetery chapel, graveside or in a room suitable for a service,
- Led by your own minister of religion (priest) or a celebrant.

WHERE THE BURIAL TAKES PLACE

The burial will take place on the same day as the service. It can take place on the same site as the service, where your funeral director will lead the pallbearers in carrying the coffin to the graveside, followed by the family and sometimes the mourners. Alternatively, the burial may take place at a different location from the service. The funeral party follows the hearse to the burial location. Other mourners may be invited to follow to the burial location or wait for the funeral party to return.

THE COMMITTAL

The priest or celebrant will often say a few words before the committal and lowering of the coffin into the grave. Relatives can then add earth or flowers to the coffin as a last act of respect.

GRAVE MEMORIALS

You can arrange a memorial for a later date, which will be placed on the grave after nine to twelve months when the ground has settled.

CREMATIONS: WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

THE SERVICE

You can choose to have no service at all (unattended) or to have a cremation service (attended). If you decide upon a service, then it will often be:

- About 30-45 minutes long (venue dependant),
- Religious or non-religious,
- Held in the crematorium chapel or held separately in a church and followed by a short committal service in the crematorium chapel,
- Led by your own minister of religion (priest) or a celebrant.

THE COMMITTAL

The end of the service is known as the committal. You can choose to have the curtains close round the coffin during the committal or for it to remain in view.

Another option is a lychgate committal, where the committal takes place at the church's lychgate, followed by an unattended cremation. This allows family and mourners to say their final goodbyes at the church and then attend the funeral reception without the added travel time to and from the crematorium.

AFTER THE SERVICE

Your funeral director will lead close family and then mourners out of the chapel, to view floral tributes and to greet funeral guests.

THE CREMATION

This usually takes place on the same day as the cremation service. Close family can witness the charging of the cremator, as required by some faiths.

PEACE OF MIND

An identity card is always kept with the coffin and, in accordance with the Cremation Code of Practice, the coffin is always cremated with the body. The cremated remains are kept with the Cremation Certificate, which is given to you when the cremated remains are collected.

AFTER THE CREMATION

We can help discuss options for laying to rest the cremated remains and to look at urns or memorials, if desired.

GET IN TOUCH

Contact your local funeral arranger at your nearest Welham Jones branch to discuss how you would like to commemorate your loved one

BOROUGH GREEN

43 Western Road, TN15 8AL - 01732 780600

ORPINGTON & CHELSFIELD

6 Windsor Drive, BR6 6EY - 01689 452525

CHISLEHURST & BROMLEY

4 Belmont Parade, Green Lane, BR7 6AN - 020 8467 2222

SEVENOAKS

156 London Road, TN13 1DJ - 01732 742400

SWANLEY

31 Station Road, BR8 8ES - 01322 619100

TONBRIDGE

164 High Street, TN9 1BB - 01732 617171

TUNBRIDGE WELLS

39 Crescent Road, TN1 2LZ - 01892 300330

Or send us a message by scanning the QR code



or visiting www.welhamjones.co.uk



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