

## What is a Good Funeral?

Only you can know what would be a 'good' funeral for you and your family - everyone is different, but at The Natural Death Centre we believe that a 'good funeral' is one where you, the person arranging the funeral, feel in control of what happens, and where you are given clear information about the choices available to you.

A funeral doesn't have to be an event following a formulaic pattern; you can create a ceremony that is uniquely designed to reflect the life of the person who has died.

We believe that if people knew they had more choices, they would much rather be in control of their loved one's 'send-off', and funeral ceremonies could become special memories rather than occasions to be dreaded.

## What are my choices?

By law, a body must be either be cremated or buried, but the detail of the funeral ceremony itself is entirely up to you. Burial can take place in a churchyard, cemetery, natural burial ground or on private land.

## What things do I need to think about?

Some things worth discussing before beginning to make arrangements are:

**What type of ceremony would you like?**

**Whereabouts would you like to hold it?**

**Do you need a celebrant to help you?**

**How much involvement would the family like?**

**What type of coffin would you want?**

**In what ways do you want to personalise the ceremony?**

**What budget do you have available?**

## What type of funeral ceremony can we have?

A traditional religious service is appropriate for some families. For others, a 'semi-religious' service or a totally non-religious ceremony is more apt.

Some families/friends conduct all parts of a ceremony themselves or a celebrant can help you.

You may want no service at all. The choice is yours.

## Is a good funeral going to be more expensive?

Funerals can be costly, and relatively few people qualify for State help with the funeral costs. (Contact your local Jobcentreplus for details.) But just because a funeral is 'good' doesn't mean it has to be more expensive – depending on the choices you make it could easily cost much less than some of the packages offered by funeral directors.

## How do we find the right Funeral Director to help us?

Although legally you don't have to use a funeral director, the vast majority of people find it helpful to have some professional support.

Think about the type of ceremony that you want. Take your time. Talk to family and friends. Then ring around several funeral directors to see which suits you best.

As well as being aware of your budget, you may want to think about your needs are listened to, how accommodating, competent, and approachable they are and how much choice you are offered. If you can't face making the phone calls yourself, ask a friend to do this for you.

Some funeral directors who appear to be very flexible in their work with families are listed on our website and in 'The Natural Death Handbook'.

**If you need immediate impartial advice, please ring our Helpline.**

## What is The Natural Death Centre?

The [Natural Death Centre](#) is an educational charity working towards a situation where all people are empowered in the process of dying, and organising a funeral. Founded in 1991, we are committed to supporting cultural change and we work in death education, challenging social attitudes to death and dying. We also run the [Association of Natural Burial Grounds](#), a body set up to promote green burials,

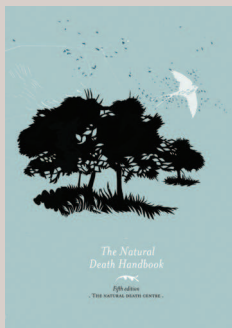
In 2012 we introduced The [Natural Death Society](#), to bring together people who share the same belief in our human right to approach death and funerals with the same freedom that we live our lives.

By joining the [Natural Death Society](#) you will help support our work – all money received from subscriptions will be used to fund our telephone Helpline, helping us to reach people in need of our help and advice.

For a £20.00 initial subscription, and £2.00 a month thereafter (minimum 12 months) you will receive a complimentary copy of the new Natural Death Handbook (RRP £24.00), an information pack including invaluable documents and guidance on arranging a funeral, regular newsletters, discounted tickets to educational events and workshops run by the Natural Death Centre, and a membership certificate and a lapel pin.

As a charity we rely on the generosity and support of

the public to enable us to continue our work, so please consider joining us and help us to help others. Full details of how to join the [Natural Death Society](http://www.naturaldeath.org.uk) are on our website [www.naturaldeath.org.uk](http://www.naturaldeath.org.uk)



## **The Natural Death Handbook (fifth edition)**

The latest edition of this essential and influential guide covering the practical, emotional and spiritual aspects of death and dying.

Completely revised and expanded into a three book box set, the [Natural Death Handbook](http://www.naturaldeath.org.uk) now includes a collection of essays on death by eminent writers, and a directory of natural burial grounds in the UK and Ireland, progressive funeral directors and suppliers of green coffins and urns.

Together these three books make an indispensable guide for anyone in need of practical advice, reassurance and inspiration.

\*Fifth edition published June 1st 2012

**Receive a complimentary copy:** Join the new Natural Death Society and receive the Handbook free of charge (see over)

Or

Buy online: [www.naturaldeath.org.uk](http://www.naturaldeath.org.uk)

Buy by post: Send a cheque for £24.00

made payable to The Natural Death Centre.

**Delivery to:**

Name:

Address:

Postcode:

Phone Number:

## **How do I find out more?**

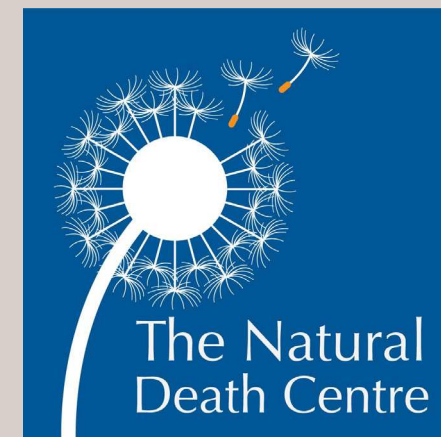
This leaflet is intended to help you begin thinking about the type of funeral you would like to have – the choices available are limited only by your imagination and budget!

If you would like to explore ideas further there are some suggestions below:

### **More information**

- Contact us on our [Helpline 01962 712690](tel:01962712690)
- Read 'The Natural Death Handbook'
- Visit our website [www.naturaldeath.org.uk](http://www.naturaldeath.org.uk)
- Join the [Natural Death Society](http://www.naturaldeath.org.uk) – see over
- Contact The Natural Death Centre by phone, email or post.
- See the booklet 'What to do after a Death in England and Wales' (January 2009, ref DWP1027), Department for Work and Pensions. [www.dwp.gov.uk](http://www.dwp.gov.uk)

# How do I arrange a Good Funeral?



*lifting the lid on death*



**Natural Death Centre  
& Association of  
Natural Burial Grounds**  
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