

What options are available for your funeral ceremony?

Please note;

There is no legal requirement with regard to the ceremony; the only legal requirements are attached to the disposal of the body.

A funeral ceremony is when the body is present

A memorial ceremony is when the body is not present

A humanist will only provide a ceremony with NO religious elements,

A celebrant will support any religious, spiritual elements, which support and comfort you as well as no religion should you choose.

A member of the clergy will provide a totally religious ceremony

One size does not and will never fit everyone well, this applies to end of life ceremonies, communities need to be meaningfully represented, cultural differences adhered to, there are a range of bespoke services and professionals who are able to support you.

Ceremonies should be written and executed to create a safe resting place for your most complicated feelings of joy or trauma, so you do not have to carry these feelings around with you. I believe we all need such places of ritual safekeeping and so by creating a safe place or a celebratory place for people and communities' to express their thoughts, feelings and aspirations, brings people and communities together, a rite of passage has this ability

Option 1; Self-Styling, you are able to completely arrange everything, hold a ceremony should you want one, in a place of your choosing, do your homework because there are legal requirements re; documentation and the practical challenges of storing and moving the body of your loved one, if you prepare this well, it can be a very cathartic and moving experience.

Option 2; Traditional, again doing your homework in advance is key, make contact with your Funeral Director, know the cost involved and exactly what they can provide for you, Funeral Directors are an enabling profession, they will respond positively to get this right for you. The Funeral Director will take some responsibility of the paperwork, and has built up good relationships with your local clergy, crematorium and it has a list of officiants it recommends. If possible there is opportunity with in their private chapels for you to spend, should you choose to spend time with your loved one.

Option 3; a mixed approach, using the Funeral Director for their professional services and;

- Having your ceremony at home, self-selecting a celebrant / humanist who you know is perfect, and the celebrant can work with your loved one before they pass away. A ceremony at home with tea and cake, unrushed and peaceful in an environment you all feel at ease in, can be very beautiful you could wave good bye at the door or accompany your loved one to a cemetery or crematorium
- Having a simply ceremony and there afterwards a memorial service, there are always time restrictions at a church and crematorium, a memorial ceremony enables you to be unrestricted and make the occasion more free flowing, in a venue which is

suitable for you, celebratory, for example a sports day for a sports man, a bake off for a baker, a game of bingo or a quiz, a race night, a celebrant / humanist could help with the flow of the day and the tributes.

- A ceremony held in the venue of your choice, often with your love one in mind the local pub, the football stadium, the dog track, the club house, the bingo hall, anywhere is possible with the right permissions and risk assessments and many wedding venues will accommodate funeral ceremonies. Public buildings do offer the conveniences of car parks and general facilities.

Your imagination is the key, do what's right for your family and a celebrant / humanist will help you to make all of this possible, the beauty of all chipping in, for example making bunting, photograph slide shows, speeches, flowers, game preparing, table decorations etc, is that this becomes an event that everyone has to opportunity to become actively involved with and not just simply attend.

Option 4; Direct to crematorium, your loved one will be taken without ceremony. However there is always opportunity for a memorial ceremony, at a time and venue of your choosing, or you may choose to have a living funeral ceremony before your loved ones pass away, enabling them to hear all those wonderful words of love

Professional Help

I have mentioned your Local Funeral Director and please shop around, they are a business like any other, and so are your local humanists and celebrants, it's important you get this right personality, experience and qualification.

<https://coffinclub.co.uk/coffin-clubs/#> this Club exists to inform people of all the choices available to them around their end-of-life funeral celebration. This is to enable everyone to have exactly the send-off they would like and one which is right for them. There is also an opportunity to design your own coffin and never forget you can mark your love one's coffin with messages should you wish.

Dying matters, an organisation working to create an open culture that talks about death, dying and bereavement, has provided many resources, an electronic checklist, which includes checking you affairs are in order and place for wishes and comments, useful resources and checklists, their website can be found at <https://www.dyingmatters.org/>

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