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What to do after a friend or relative dies




WARWICKSHIRE RACE
EQUALITY PARTNERSHIP

A GUIDE FOR OUR COMMUNITIES

Foreword

This guide has been prepared by Warwickshire Race Equality Partnership, (WREP), in response to cultural and religious sensitivities that have been brought to our attention across the county by our communities.

It soon became apparent to WREP that there was a lack of information available to our communities, covering all of the elements as to what to do when a loved one, friend or relative dies.

This guide seeks to produce a condensed version of all the necessary guidance, for example how to certify and register a death, who to contact concerning the arrangements for either the funeral, a burial or a cremation. Specifically, to combine this with religious and spiritual guidance to meet the needs of the diverse communities across Warwickshire.

It may be that you are attending the funeral or ceremony of a friend from a different faith. This guide will also assist you in understanding the different cultural, religious and spiritual diversities, appropriate dress, etiquette and whether or not gifts or flowers are appropriate.

Furthermore we have made it local to Warwickshire. Most other guides or leaflets are generic. We however have included all of the relevant contact details you will need, according to the area where you live in Warwickshire. We also appreciate that funerals can be expensive, so we have included a useful guide to the benefits you may be entitled to.

We hope you will find this information useful, sensitive and informative and that it will guide you through the decisions and arrangements that you will need to make at what is an emotional and difficult time.

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Can you help WREP? We have produced this guide in an independent voluntary capacity to assist the communities in Warwickshire. We hope you have found it useful?

To enable us to continue in all our areas of work, you may like to consider making a donation. Please complete the donation form below with a gift of whatever you can afford and return it to Warwickshire Race Equality Partnership, Room 127, Morgan Conference Suite, Warwickshire College - Rugby Centre, Technology Drive, Rugby Warwickshire CV21 1AR.

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We will use the information you have supplied to communicate with you according to data protection guidelines. WREP (registered charity number 1111481) If you would prefer not to hear from us please contact us on 01788 863117

WREP

Warwickshire Race Equality Partnership is an independent voluntary organisation, registered charity and company limited by guarantee.

Our Objectives

- To work towards the elimination of racial discrimination
- To promote equality of opportunity and good relations between persons of different racial groups
- To relieve the needs of those who have suffered racial discrimination by the provision of information, advice and support.

Contact Us

Warwickshire Race Equality Partnership
Room 127
Morgan Conference Suite
Warwickshire College
Rugby Centre
Technology Drive, Rugby
Warwickshire CV21 1AR
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Email: info@wrep.org.uk Web: www.wrep.org.uk



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Overview of Our Guide

An Emotional Time. Guidance when you need it most.



The Death of a loved one or friend is an incredibly emotional and difficult time. We have compiled this information book to guide you through the arrangements and decisions that you will need to make. For example, obtaining a medical certificate, registering the death and arranging a funeral.

Diversity. Your Faith, Your Guide.



Funeral customs vary by religion, ethnicity and culture. We have compiled this guide to assist you according to your religious and cultural beliefs. We have included useful contacts within your local community who can support and guide you through your bereavement.

A Difficult Time. Bereavement Benefits.



The death of a family member can cause financial hardship. To assist you we have provided some information regarding Bereavement Benefits that you may be entitled to, such as help towards the costs of the funeral.

Sikhism

A dying Sikh may receive comfort from reciting hymns from the Sikh Holy Book. A relative or other practising Sikh may do this. A Sikh should die with the name of God, Waheguru, (Wonderful Lord), being recited. Some Sikhs may want to have Amrit, (holy water), in their mouth. After death the body is covered by a white cloth. The 5K's or Karkars, (Kachera, an undergarment, Kanga, a wooden comb, Kara, a steel or iron bracelet, Kesh, uncut hair and beard and Kirpan, a short sword that represents compassion and one's task to defend the truth), should remain on the body. Family members may wish to bathe the body themselves. Under no circumstances should health professionals trim the deceased's beard or hair. Sikhs are cremated as soon as possible after death and dressed in the 5 K's. The body is taken to the Gurdwara (Sikh temple) after a short ceremony at home. A service, Antam Sanskaar, which celebrates the completion of life, is conducted at the Gurdwara. It is optional for guests to bow to the Siri Guru Granth Sahib, although they are expected to accept Prasad (sweet pudding), which is considered a blessing. Further prayers are offered at the Crematorium. As cremation happens, the Community Prayer or Ardas is recited. Two Sikh daily prayers, Japji and Kirtan Soila are also recited. Only family members attend the Cremation. Rather than lamenting the passing of an individual, Sikhism teaches resignation to the will of the creator, emphasizing that death is a natural process, and an opportunity for reunion of the soul with its maker. Relatives and friends attend up to 10 days of readings from the scriptures. At the end, the oldest son is given a turban as a sign that he is now head of the family. In Sikhism, the ashes are given to the relatives who either scatter them on the earth or immerse them or scatter them in flowing water. When entering the Gurdwara shoes should be removed and your head covered. Flowers, food and charitable donations are appropriate, however food should not contain eggs, meat, fish or alcohol. For Sikhs death is merely a stage in the progress of the soul in its journey to God. Because the soul never dies, there should be no mourning at the death of a Sikh. Focus on the good times and express love towards them, do not focus on sadness or loss.



Paganism

There are many Pagan traditions practiced within the UK, and individuals may use different terms to describe their tradition or beliefs; Druidry, Wicca, Heathenism, Asatru, Witchcraft, the Path of the Goddess, Eco-Paganism and others. Pagans are pantheistic, polytheistic and animistic; considering Nature sacred or divine. As such, death is a transition not an ending. In the process of dying, the individual is seen to be embarking on a journey to join the ancestors. As an ancestor, they remain part of the tribe, community or family, their presence being now in a different form; as spirit, stories, teachings, memories.

Pagans may wish to be buried or cremated, most choosing burial in natural burial grounds, with simple biodegradable coffins or shrouds. They may wish to have grave goods interred with them, such as a sacred blade, chalice or pendant, all of which would be provided by the family or community. Where a Pagan Celebrant is not available, an Interfaith Celebrant may be used or none at all. Funerals tend to be community-centred, with talking, sharing memories, giving thanks, making prayers, playing music or drums. At burials, the community may choose to backfill the grave, this being accompanied by songs, drumming or prayers. Useful contacts include:

www.pagantransitions.org.uk

Life Rites 07823 690240 www.liferites.org.uk

OTHER USEFUL CONTACTS;

The British Humanist Association

020 7079 3580 Will be able to advise should you wish to arrange a funeral without any form of religious ceremony.

The Interfaith Seminary, (<http://www.interfaithfoundation.org/>)

0333 3321996 provide a service for families of mixed religious faiths and for individuals with very personal spiritualities.

The Institute of Civil Funerals (<http://www.iocf.org.uk/>)

01480 861411, cater for those who require the option of a non-religious funeral; they may not have practiced a religious faith, but are not humanists or atheists. Some families feel that a funeral needs just a few touches of cultural religion, without any God, such as the Lords Prayer, or a Hymn.

Green Fuse 01803 840779 www.greenfuse.co.uk and The Fellowship of Independent Celebrants 02082 421842

www.foic.org.uk may both be able to provide guidance and celebrants to match the character, life and beliefs of the person who has died.



What do I do first

If someone dies in hospital

The hospital staff will contact a family member, usually the next of kin or a friend, whoever the deceased named on admission to hospital. The staff will lay out the deceased and normally arrange for them to be taken to the hospital mortuary. If arrangements are made swiftly however, the body can be collected from the ward by the Funeral Director. You will be asked to collect any personal belongings.

If someone dies at home

When someone dies at home, their General Practitioner, GP, should be called as soon as possible. The GP will visit the home to certify the death. The family can then call the funeral director to arrange for them to collect the body. If the GP is unable to certify death, the GP will notify the police who will in turn inform the Coroner and arrange for an ambulance to take the body to a hospital mortuary. An ambulance should be called if you do not have a GP.

In both cases

Most funerals take place with the support of a Funeral Director. You will be asked to arrange for the body to be collected from the hospital mortuary by a Funeral Director, who will normally take it to their multifaith Chapel of Rest.

Before a death can be formally registered, a doctor or senior qualified nurse will need to issue a medical cause of death certificate giving the cause of death. In hospital this is normally done by the hospital doctor who treated the patient. If a person has died without seeing a hospital doctor their GP may be able to certify death. If someone dies at home and the death was expected the GP will usually issue the certificate. The doctor will give you the certificate in a sealed envelope addressed to the Registrar of Births, Deaths and Marriages. You will also receive a formal notice explaining how to register the death.

What happens when a doctor cannot certify the death?

A doctor is not allowed to issue a certificate if they are unsure about the cause of death or if they haven't seen the deceased recently, usually within the last 14 days. When a doctor cannot certify the death they will have to report it to the Coroner. All deaths that occur in unnatural, suspicious, violent circumstances or whilst in custody are reported to the coroner. If death occurred whilst undergoing an operation in hospital, it will also have to be referred to the Coroner. In all cases the doctor will write on the formal notice that they have reported it to the Coroner.

If you need advice from the Coroner's Office regarding the reporting of a death you should feel free to contact them. Your local Coroner's Office is as follows:

Leamington Spa Coroner's Office
Newbold Terrace
Leamington Spa
CV32 4EL Tel; 01926 415000



Judaism

As death nears, a Rabbi may be called to pray and to recite the Confession to a dying Jew, who should never be left alone. Other Jews present should recite psalms. Following death, the declaration of faith, 'Shema', is recited. A 'Shomer' or watchman will stay with the deceased from the time of death until burial. After death, health care professionals should handle the body as little as possible and it should be covered by a white sheet. A ritual washing is traditional, before dressing in Tachrichim shrouds, usually pure white linen to symbolise that we are all equal in death. Post-mortems are disliked. Respect must always be shown to the deceased by burying as soon as possible, but not on the Sabbath or Holy Days. Simple wooden coffins are normal. The coffin remains closed; tradition teaches it is disrespectful to look at a person who cannot look back. The service takes place in designated Jewish burial grounds. Prayers are said in the chapel and at the graveside by male mourners, as they place the coffin in the ground. The 'Chesed Shel Emet', or ultimate act of love and kindness is shown to the deceased by mourners by placing shovels of earth onto the casket.

Traditional words of comfort are said after the burial; 'May you be comforted among all the mourners of Zion and Jerusalem' or by an expression in Hebrew that translates; 'Words from the heart go directly to the heart.'

There are three periods of mourning during which mourners recite prayers three times a day. During the first week, (Shiva), mourners remain at home and friends visit to pay their respect, a 'Shiva Call', flowers are not appropriate. Shloshim concludes mourning after 30 days for all but children of the deceased, who remain in mourning for a year. A ceremony to consecrate the tombstone is held after mourning at the cemetery. Charitable donations are fitting memorial gifts. Flowers are not appropriate. Funeral attire consists of dark clothing. Men wear a head covering, known as a Yarmulke. Desserts, fruit and kosher food baskets are customary.



Islam

As death nears, family members should join the dying and recite verses from the Qur'an. The dying person may wish to face towards Mecca (south east) and the Declaration of Faith (Shahada) is said. After the death, non-Muslim health care workers should ask permission to touch the body. They must wear disposable gloves. The body must be kept covered. Post mortems are disliked. Muslims are always buried ideally within 24 hours of death. Women do not attend the burial. There is a ritual washing of the body by same-sex Muslims. It is recommended that at least four persons are present to help carry and bathe the body. Washing will normally take place at the Mosque, but it can also be arranged at a funeral directors premises. The Imam of the local Mosque will be available to guide the washing and prepare the "Kafan". Male family members carry the coffin to the Mosque or directly to the cemetery. After performing the "Janaza" prayer, the body is buried in a deep grave facing Mecca. Some cemeteries are now allowing bodies to be buried without using a 'wooden' coffin, so that Muslims can be buried in the 'Kafan' only. Prior arrangement with the local Cemetery is required in order to do so. Islamic law requires the friends and relatives to feed the mourners for three days. Mourning may continue until the 40th day and it is ended by Quranic readings and a meal. Believers should find consolation that they will be re-united with loved ones in the Hereafter Insha-Allah.

'For those who patiently preserve, there is the attainment of the final home. Gardens of perpetual bliss, they shall enter there, as well as the righteous among their forefathers, their spouses and their offspring' Surah Ar-Raid 13:22-23.

Islam emphasises simplicity and gifts of flowers may therefore be unsuitable. You should always check with your local religious leader or the family, if you are unsure. In circumstances where you may, palm branches, other greens or individual flowers are placed on the grave.



The Role of the Coroner

The Coroner will decide whether the death needs to be investigated; this may necessitate a post-mortem or an inquest.

Post-Mortems

A post-mortem is a medical examination of the body meant to find out more about the cause of death. It should not affect when you can have a funeral. The Coroner does not need relatives consent and you cannot object to a post-mortem taking place. You should however tell the Coroner if you have religious or cultural beliefs. Relatives are entitled to be represented at the post-mortem examination by a doctor.

If, having conducted the post-mortem, the Coroner determines that the person died of natural causes, the Coroner will issue a 'pink form B' showing the cause of death so that the death can be registered. Burial or Cremation may also be authorised at this stage.

Investigations and Inquests

Investigations are held to find out who the deceased person was and how and when they died. Investigations are held where the cause of death is unknown or the Coroner believes that the person died in suspicious circumstances or in custody.

An Inquest is the formal part of the process carried out towards the end of the investigation. Here evidence of the circumstances of death are considered. The inquest is held in public. Unfortunately inquests may take some time. You may ask the Coroner to give you an interim certificate of the fact of the death or a letter confirming the person's death. You can use this certificate for benefits and National Insurance purposes.

When the body does not need to be examined anymore, the Coroner may give you an order for burial or certificate for cremation. This means you can arrange the funeral. The Coroner will send a certificate after inquest to the Registrar, giving the cause of death. The Registrar can then register the death.

How to register a death

The death must be registered with the Registrar of Births, Deaths and Marriages. If the death has not been referred to the Coroner, you must register the death within five days. It is a criminal offence not to do so. If the death has been reported to the Coroner, it can't be registered until the Registrar has the Coroner's permission.

Whilst it is possible to register the death in any area, it may be preferable to register the death in the same area as the death occurred, especially if you wish to avoid any delay in arranging the funeral. When someone dies at home, the death should be registered at the Registration Office for the district where they lived. If the death took place in hospital, care or a nursing home, it should be registered in the district where the hospital or home is situated. It is always advised that you make a formal appointment with the Registrar, as opposed to simply turning up.

Your Local Registration Offices in Warwickshire are:

Nuneaton Registration Office
Riversley Park, Coton Road, Nuneaton CV11 5HA Tel; 03005 550255

Warwick Registration Office
Shire Hall, Warwick CV34 4RR Tel; 03005 550255

Stratford-Upon-Avon Registration Office
Winton House, Church Street, Stratford-Upon-Avon CV37 6HB
Tel; 03005 550255

Rugby Registration Office
5 Bloxam Place, Rugby CV21 3DS Tel; 03005 550255

Who can register a death?

A relative present at the death.
A relative present during the last illness.
A relative living in the same district where the death occurred.
Anyone also present at the death.
The owner/occupier of the building where the death occurred.
The person arranging the funeral but not the funeral director.

Hinduism

As death nears, Hindus may receive comfort from readings from the Hindu holy books or hymns. The family who should be present may call a Hindu priest to perform holy rites. Some may wish to lie on the floor and the person should be given Ganges water and the sacred Tulsi leaf in the mouth by the relatives. A person should die with the Mantra of God being recited. Hindus prefer to die at home. After death the family will wish to wash the body themselves. If no family member is available, health professionals should wear disposable gloves to close the person's eyes and straighten the limbs. All jewellery and religious objects should be left on the body. Hindus are cremated (except children under 3 years who are buried), as soon as possible after death, usually within 24 hours. Death only applies to the physical body, not to the soul. Upon death, the soul which truly represented the person has departed. According to Hindu scripture, Bhagavad Gita;

‘The soul is a spirit that a sword cannot pierce, the fire cannot burn, the water cannot melt and the air cannot dry. The soul is free, unbounded, holy, pure and perfect. The Hindu's goal is to avoid rebirth (reincarnation), so that the individual soul merges with the supreme soul and achieves Moksha (liberation)’.

Part of the service takes place at home. The Priest or Pandit chants from the scripture. The chief mourner, usually the oldest son, performs rituals. Mourners walk around the coffin which is then closed and taken to the crematorium for funeral prayers. Mourners dress casually in simple white clothes and arrive empty handed. Guests should not exchange greetings with the official mourners but instead nod or hug in sympathy. Flower garlands and mixed seasonal sprays may be in the open casket. Guests are expected to view the body. Mourners and friends return to the deceased's home. Mourning rituals vary, but often involve gifts to priests or charity. Ten days after death, a ceremony is held at the home to liberate the soul for its ascent into heaven and reaching the land of the ancestors. Rituals do vary according to the region of origin. If you visit the home you are expected to bring fruit, although it is always worth checking as practices do vary.



Christianity

As death nears a Priest or Minister should be notified. Many Christians may wish to receive communion and say prayers of forgiveness or repentance. Christians may wish to be anointed with oil. Following death, a service of prayers may be held at the deceased's home. For Orthodox, Roman Catholics and some Anglicans, the service involves a church service with a Mass or Communion. The casket remains open in Orthodox funerals. Protestant services are simpler and the body is not normally visible. There is no official mourning period or mourning dress. Christians may be buried or cremated, however often only close family are present at the burial of the deceased or ashes. A memorial or thanksgiving service may be held some time later after the funeral.

Roman Catholic. Sombre floral arrangements may be sent to the funeral or family home. It is customary to visit the home and spend a few moments in private prayer as the family hold their vigil. At the Mass lighting a candle to celebrate the departed brings comfort to the mourners.

Protestant—Lutheran, Methodist, Presbyterian, Episcopalian and Baptist. Appropriate expressions of sympathy include sending a card, attending the visitation or funeral, sending flowers, donating to a charity or bringing food to the family home. The Protestant funeral ceremony emphasises the afterlife and celebrates the person's life through remembrances or testimonials. Funeral guests should dress respectfully and some still wear traditional black.



What do I need to register a death?

- The medical certificate showing the cause of death.
- The person's medical card if possible.
- The person's birth and marriage certificates, if you have them.
- The date and place the person died.
- The date and place of birth, (the town and county if born in the U.K., the country if born abroad).
- The full name of the person, (including any previous names used or Maiden Name).
- The person's usual address.
- The person's occupation and the name and occupation of their spouse or civil partner.

After you have registered the death

The Registrar will give you a certificate for burial or cremation (the green form), unless you have already been given an order for burial, or the certificate for cremation already by the Coroner.

This gives permission for the body to be buried or for you to apply for the body to be cremated.

Arranging the funeral

Most funerals are arranged by the nearest relative. If there are no relatives, anyone close to the deceased may make the arrangements instead. Many people choose to arrange the funeral through a Funeral Director which is easier, especially at a stressful time. Funeral Directors are also a fantastic source of advice and guidance. Many Funeral Directors are on hand 24 hours a day and 7 days a week to provide their support.

The choice of funeral is highly personal and may differ greatly according to the deceased's faith. It is important to reflect the wishes of the person who has died and the close family around them. It is a sad fact that many bereaved people do not have a clear idea of what their loved one would have wanted. It is always worth finding out if there is a Will, as this may give details of what the person wanted for their funeral arrangements. It is important that people should have as much information as possible when arranging a funeral—either for a loved one or for themselves.

Research has shown that for many, the 21st century funeral is undergoing fundamental change; whereas it was traditionally viewed as a time for mourning in some faiths, the ceremony is now a celebration of a person's life. Many funerals focus more on the person's life as well as the loss. Many celebrate the uniqueness of the individual, their character and the person they were. Personalising a funeral provides an opportunity to create a unique commemoration to the person who has died. Most Funeral Directors will be only too happy to discuss and help you with all of the arrangements, across all religions and cultures, no matter what your belief or faith. Options include the coffin or casket, venues, music, hymns, readings or eulogy, all the little personal touches.

The National Association of Funeral Directors.
618 Warwick Road, Solihull, West Midlands B91 1AA.
Tel 0121 711 1636



Buddhism

To Buddhists death and the process of dying is of immense importance and where possible should be treated with the greatest of care and respect. Buddhism holds that for all those who have yet to free themselves from ignorance or craving, death will be followed by rebirth and the first moments of the new rebirth will be conditioned by the last conscious moments before death, which in turn depends on how they have lived their life. Throughout life, things are done and said; some good, some bad, some positive and some negative. To influence the rebirth for the best, encourage the dying to focus on the good and positive things they have done, as well as inspiring and beneficial teachings of Buddhism. Buddhists believe in dying in a conscious and calm state of mind. As the person nears death, ensure that they have a quiet and peaceful environment to allow for meditation. A monk, religious teacher or another Buddhist is invited to chant passages of scripture, such as;

'Even the gorgeous royal chariots wear out; and indeed this body too wears out. But the teaching of goodness does not age; and so goodness makes that known to the good ones.'

After death, apart from local customs and rituals particular to specific schools of Buddhism, the remains can be disposed of as the deceased or relatives wish. It should be borne in mind that there may be some conscious presence lingering for some time after death; it is not unusual for the dead person to be spoken to as if alive and for meditation and rituals to be performed to assist the consciousness to pass smoothly on its way. For these reasons Tibetan Buddhists will not want the body to be touched for three days. The funeral and disposal of the remains can take place at any time. It is not unusual for the body to be kept until family members can gather. In the case of an important person, it could be a year before the funeral takes place. Conduct at funerals is respectful, people dress formally and apart from some local preferences, black is worn. Funeral is a time of reflection and a reminder of the transitory nature of life and mortality. It is a time to say farewell, to ask forgiveness and to offer good wishes and blessings to the deceased on their journey into another life.



Baha'i

The Baha'i faith is an independent world religion. The fundamental principles enunciated by Baha'u'llah, the Prophet Founder, are the oneness of God, the oneness of religion and the oneness of humankind. Funeral services are simple and dignified. There is no clergy in the Baha'i faith; services and arrangements for internment may be left to the relatives of the deceased, in consultation with the local Baha'i community. Each service is unique. Baha'is are not embalmed or cremated. In Baha'i law, the deceased is to be buried no more than one hour's journey from the place of death. The Baha'i writings do not specify a time for burial, though Baha'u'llah says that ***“the sooner the burial taketh place, the more fitting and preferable.”*** If no Baha'i cemetery is available, the deceased may be buried in any cemetery. The Baha'i emblem, a nine pointed star, with the word “Baha'i” inside, is used on the gravestone. There is one ceremonial requirement at a Baha'i funeral; the recitation of the “Prayer for the Dead” by one believer only at the graveside. The funeral is a joyful event honouring the promotion of a soul to its next realm of existence. Also customary among the Baha'is are the following which followers may wish to observe:

It is preferable to have the position of the deceased with the feet pointing towards the Qiblah, in other words towards Akka and Baha'ullah's own resting place.

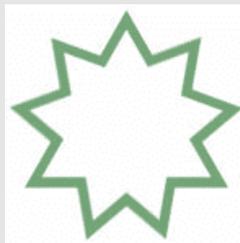
Furthermore, it is stipulated in the Kitab-i-Aqdas, (the most Holy Book), that:

The body is to be washed carefully and wrapped in a shroud of white cloth, preferably silk but cotton is also mentioned. Washing the body was traditionally given to an intimate of the deceased and was a great honour. Some still do so, although a funeral director can also assist. The body may also be perfumed with attar of rose water.

Coffins should be of crystal, stone, or hard fine wood. Metal or soft wood should not be used.

The deceased, unless he or she is under 15 years of age, should be buried wearing a Baha'i burial ring on the forefinger which bears the inscription;

“I came forth from God, and return unto Him, detached from all save Him, holding fast to His Name, the Merciful, the Compassionate.”



Arranging the funeral, continued...

You may also need to arrange a burial or funeral in line with the person's particular religion or faith. If so, you should seek advice from the person's place of worship or speak to the relevant community faith leader. Please see below for some helpful suggestions. Please note the list is not exhaustive but will guide you to the main contacts for the relevant community faiths across Warwickshire.



Warwickshire North (including North Warwickshire, Nuneaton and Bedworth);

Baha'i Faith Nuneaton 02476 350268

Collycroft Methodist 02476 313959

Evangelical (Bulkington Congregational) 02476 640072

Gurdwara Dhan Dhan Baba Vadbhag Singh Ji, Bedworth 02476 644401

Gurdwara Dukh Niwarn Sahib, Bedworth 02476 362193

Guru Nanak Sikh Gurdwara 02476 386524

Hindu Gujarati Samaj Nuneaton 02476 735984

Jireh Baptist Church 02476 347578

Manor Court Baptist Church 02476 382577

Nuneaton Jehovah Witness 02476 399339

Nuneaton Muslim Society 02476 382372

Nuneaton United Reformed Church 02476 375010

Our Lady of the Angels Roman Catholic Parish Church 02476 382139

Quakers Society of Friends 02476 396835

St. Nicolas Church of England Parish Church 02476 344553

Shri Guru Teg Bahadar Gurdwara 02476 353442

South Warwickshire (including Warwick District and Stratford-upon-Avon);

Abbey Hill United Reformed Kenilworth 02476 672752
Ahmadiyya Muslim Association 01926 882752
Babe Ke Gurdwara Leamington Spa 01926 863131
Baha'i Faith 01926 817291
Collegiate Church of St Mary, Warwick 01926 403940
Catholic Church of St Mary, Warwick 01926 492913
Dale Street Methodist Church 01926 426084
Emmanuel Evangelical Church 01926 424584
Forrest Hermitage Buddhist Hermitage 01926 624564
Holy Trinity Church Stratford-upon-Avon 01789 266316
Jehovah's Witness 01926 882242
Masjid & Muslim Community Centre 01926 429100
Our Lady of Peace and Blessed Robert Stratford-upon Avon 01789 292439
Quakers Society of Friends 01789 299950
Saint Andrews Church Stratford-upon-Avon 01789 293381
St Gregory the Great Stratford-upon-Avon 01789 292439
St. Mary's Church of England Parish Church 01926 424016
St. Nicholas Church of Warwick 01926 419905
St. Peter Apostle Roman Catholic Church 01926 423824
Sikh Gurdwara Sahib Warwick 01926 424297
Shree Krishna Mandir, Leamington Spa 01926 429100
Stratford Baptist Church 01789 414205

Rugby;

Baha'i (Southam) 01926 817291
Bilton Evangelical 01788 817326
English Martyrs Roman Catholic Parish Church 01788 565016
Guru Nanak Gurdwara 01788 333396
Jehovah's Witness 01788 541374
St Andrews Church Of England Parish
Church 01788 565609
The Hindu Mandir Rugby 01788 565105
Quakers Rugby 01788 576854
Rugby Baptist 01788 570410
Rugby Masjid Mosque 01788 543680
Rugby Methodist 01788 579068
United Reformed 01788 535201



Spirituality and Religion

Spirituality is what is important to a person and where they draw their energy.

Religion is a belief, a philosophy, a way of viewing life.

Culture is to do with traditions or rituals, a way of life, not necessarily stemming from a religious belief.

Religious practices play a strong part in how we wish to be treated in our final moments and at death.

Compassion is a natural human response in all of us, regardless of faith or religion.

Mother Teresa defined compassion as “Love in Action.”

“Love and compassion are necessities, not luxuries. Without them humanity cannot survive” - Dalai Lama.

Hereafter follows a guide to the common religious practices.

How to claim Bereavement Benefits

You do not need to claim for all benefits separately. To start your claim contact **The DWP Bereavement Service by phone 0845 606 0265 or download claim form BB1 at www.gov.uk/bereavement-allowance/how-to-claim**. Please note that the levels of benefits are correct as of January 2014 and they may go up or down.



Tell Us Once lets you report a death to most government organisations in one go. This is offered by your local council. When you register the death, the Registrar will either offer you a Tell Us Once interview or give you a unique reference number so you can take care of this over the phone or online

<https://death-tellusonce.direct.gov.uk/Death/Enrich/Recover>.

This service works out final benefit payments and pensions, cancels the passport, removes the name from the electoral roll and sorts out the Council Tax, Income Tax and National Insurance arrangements.

Warwickshire Other Faiths

Jewish Synagogue Coventry 02476 677027

Arranging a Funeral, without a Funeral Director's Help.

Please note that you can arrange a funeral without a Funeral Director's help, you can contact the cemeteries and cremation department of your local council for advice. Please also bear in mind that if you arrange a funeral, without a director, it may cost less, but you will have more to organise.

The Natural Death Centre, (<http://naturaldeath.org.uk/>). **01962 712690** can give guidance on arranging your own funeral or a direct cremation.



North Warwickshire;

Nuneaton Cemeteries Officer, (Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough Council) 02476 376357.
Heart of England Crematorium 02476 350646

South Warwickshire;

Bereavement Officer, Warwickshire District Council, Oakley Wood Cemetery and Crematorium 01926 651418
Sun Rising, Natural Burial Ground and Nature Reserve 01295 688488.

Rugby;

Rugby Borough Council Cemeteries Officer 01788 533715
Heart of England Crematorium 02476 350646 or
Oakley Wood Cemetery and Crematorium 01926 651418
Rainsbrook Cemetery and Crematorium. Please contact RBC 01788 533715

Natural, Green and Ethical Funerals

Woodland burial grounds are becoming more popular with many people looking for an alternative to traditional cemeteries or graveyards.

Natural, green or woodland burial grounds offer burial and interment of ashes in natural environments, such as meadows, woodland or pastures. As beautiful tranquil resting places, they focus on preserving the natural beauty of the environment and encouraging native wildlife and flowers. Some allow the option of natural memorials, such as the planting of a tree and the placing of a simple plaque, instead of a headstone.

The Sun Rising is richly multi-faith and part of a growing movement towards natural woodland and green burial grounds across Britain. Situated in South Warwickshire, it is developing into a nature reserve, with areas of wildflower meadow and native woodland. Offering ethical and affordable options, funerals can be traditional or very personal, of any religious or non-religious belief, with or without funeral directors.

Sun Rising, Natural Burial Ground and Nature Reserve
01295 688488.

There is also an increase in people wanting more environmentally friendly coffins, manufactured from responsibly sourced materials; 100% British wool and natural reed, wicker or willow are increasingly being used.



Bereavement Benefits. The Bereavement Benefit Scheme may apply to you if you, your husband, wife or civil partner have paid National Insurance payments. A Bereavement Payment is a tax free lump sum of **£2,000**. You may also be able to claim other benefits such as;

Bereavement Allowance Widowed Parent's Allowance Guardian's Allowance War Widow Pension

Bereavement Allowance

You may be able to claim Bereavement Allowance if you are a widow, widower or surviving civil partner between 45 and State Pension Age. It is paid to you for up to 52 weeks. The amount you will receive depends on the overall level of your partner's National Insurance (N.I) contributions and could be between **£32.49** and **£108.30** a week.

Widowed Parent's Allowance

If you are widowed, below state pension age and have at least one dependent child, you could claim this benefit. Again it is dependent on your partner's N.I. contributions, the maximum payment is again **£108.30** a week. You may also be able to claim if you are pregnant and your partner has died.

Guardian's Allowance

You may be able to qualify for Guardian's Allowance if you are bringing up a child where both parents have died. You may also be able to claim if there is one surviving parent. Guardian's Allowance rate is **£15.90** a week.

War Widow(er) Pension

A War Widow(er) Pension is paid if your wife, husband or partner died as a result of their Service in Her Majesty's Armed Forces or in a time of war. The amounts paid are extremely varied and dependent on rank served.

Paying for the Funeral and Bereavement Benefits

Funerals can be expensive. Check whether the person who has died had made any plans to pay for the funeral in advance. It is unwise to make funeral arrangements until you know how they will be paid for. If no one is willing or able to pay, the local council may be able to assist. After someone dies, their bank account is frozen unless it is a joint account. You may however still be able to use part of their savings to pay, even if the account is frozen, but you will need to provide a death certificate to the bank. It is also worth checking paperwork for Employer's or Personal Pension schemes or any life insurance policies as they may make provisions for funeral payments. Many funeral plans are registered with **The Funeral Planning Authority**, the regulatory authority.

They may be able to assist in tracing a funeral payment plan that has been made;

Tel: 0845 601619 or info@funeralplanningauthority.co.uk

The Pension Tracing Service may be able to assist. Phone **0845 600 2537** or **textphone 0845 300 0169** for people who find it difficult to speak or hear clearly. www.gov.uk/find-lost-pension.

Funeral Payments

If you are on a low income and have to arrange a funeral, you may get help towards the cost of a funeral, especially if you are in receipt of any benefits yourself. As well as the cost of the burial or cremation, death certificate and transport you may be able to claim up to **£700** for funeral expenses, the coffin and flowers. To claim please contact the

DWP Bereavement Service on 0845 606 0265 or www.gov.uk/browse/benefits



Deciding about cremation or burial

It is generally up to the Executor or next of kin to decide. You should check the Will to see what instructions the deceased person left. The Funeral Director will help you decide where the body should stay until the funeral.

Cremation

Cremation cannot take place until the cause of death is definitely known. The following documents are required:

- An application form signed by the next of kin or Executor and either
- 2 Cremation Certificates— One signed by the treating doctor and the second by an independent doctor. You will have to pay for these.

Or

- A Cremation form signed by the Coroner if the death has been investigated. There is no charge for this.

Disposal of Ashes

Ashes may be scattered or buried at the Crematorium. They can also be buried at a Churchyard or Cemetery often with a short service. You may simply also choose to keep them at home. Ashes can generally be scattered anywhere, but you should seek the landowners permission if you are doing so on private land. UK law allows for ashes to be taken abroad but many countries have strict rules on importation and so it is important to check before travelling.

Burial

Burial requires a death certificate by the doctor and a certificate for burial from the Registrar. Check the will again, as the deceased may have already arranged a grave space. Most cemeteries are owned by the Local Authority and are non denominational and open to all faiths. Some do have space dedicated to particular religious faiths. Most Cemeteries allow most types of service or ceremony.

Memorials

Churchyards and cemeteries have strict rules on the size and type of memorial allowed, so it is important to check before ordering.

Dying Abroad

If the person died outside the UK, you should register their death in line with the laws of that country and get a death certificate.

In circumstances where there is insufficient information regarding the death and the body is being brought back to the UK, you must report it to the Coroner. You can arrange a funeral and burial or cremation abroad; if you wish to do so you will need to speak to the British Consul in that country.

A Funeral Director can advise you on how to bring a body back from abroad to the UK. You will need a death certificate or formal permission from the country where the person died.

For Burial

Additionally you will need an approved translation of the foreign death certificate and either a certificate of no liability to register the death, from the Registrar in the UK, or a death certificate and a Coroner's Certificate issuing an order for burial.

For Cremation

In addition to the above requirements you will also need a cremation order from the local Coroner.



Miscarriage and Still Births

Miscarriage

Miscarriage is the loss of a baby before the 24th week of pregnancy. No registration is needed but if the baby lives for even a short time then you will need to register the birth and the death. See neonatal and perinatal deaths.

Still Births

This is the birth after the 24th week of pregnancy where the child is not born alive. A Doctor or Midwife will certify the death. Parents must present the certificate to the Registrar. Many Funeral Directors, Cemeteries and Crematoriums make no charge for the arrangement of the funeral of a still born, burial or cremation. Other charges such as for the coffin, cars or a Minister will however still apply.

Neonatal and perinatal deaths

A Neonatal death is where the baby dies after the 28th day of being born. A Perinatal death is where the baby is born after the 24th week of pregnancy but dies within 7 days. In both cases the birth and death must both be registered. The birth is registered in the normal way. The death is registered by taking the medical certificate to the Registrar within 5 days.

It is worth noting that parents may still be able to claim certain benefits for up to 8 weeks, after the death of a baby. Please also be aware that it is not always possible to have a baby cremated due to the limitation of ashes.