



Dying Matters

Let's talk about it

# Planning your funeral party



## Introduction

You can be your own funeral planner or even better get together with others to share stories, ideas and information – then put pen to paper and each write up your own plan which you can share with your loved ones. Keep it with your important papers for the future and let your loved ones know where they are.

This pack has been made to help you get started with organising a party to jointly plan funerals and includes:

- invitations to send to your guests
- background information about planning funerals
- a set of topics and notes to help plan your funeral

## A few funeral facts <sup>1</sup>

- 1 82% of people do not have a pre-paid funeral plan
- 2 46% have not made any financial provision for their own death
- 3 The average cost of dying in the UK in 2010 was £6,801
- 4 The basic cost is £2,857
- 5 Burials cost an average of £3,168, with regional variations – from the London average of £4,772 to £2,745 in the North West of England
- 6 80% of funerals in the UK are cremations at an average cost of £2,546
- 7 20% of funerals in the UK in 2010 were secular
- 8 60% of adults have not made a will, including 25% of the over 65s <sup>2</sup>

## Getting started

Decide who you would like invite and what type of party you would like to hold. You could hold a buffet or dinner party, or an afternoon tea party or coffee morning. You could even provide food that is in keeping such as Death by Chocolate cake, Angel cake, Death by Chocolate cocktail or Day of the Dead bread.

To help your guests to prepare for the party share the background information about funerals with them several days beforehand and encourage them to start thinking about what funeral they might want before they come. They may want to view the Dying Matters award winning video *A Party for Kath* as an introduction to the subject. You can watch it by downloading it from the Dying Matters website, visit [www.dyingmatters.org/site/party-for-kath](http://www.dyingmatters.org/site/party-for-kath)

Make sure you have enough paper and pens for everyone to write their thoughts and maybe an envelope for each person to put their funeral plans in. It is helpful if everyone writes down their wishes and why they have made a particular wish, such as what they want to be buried in, in case it is queried after their death.

You will need to decide with your guests where the plans will be kept after you finish. Sometimes the host keeps them, but you might want everyone to keep their own. If you need any more information or resources please email us at [info@dyingmatters.org](mailto:info@dyingmatters.org) or call freephone 08000 21 44 66 .

Good luck. Don't forget to tell us how you get on.

## Dying Matters resources

Dying Matters has produced a range of leaflets and postcards to support conversations on dying, death and bereavement. These are available on line at [www.dyingmatters.org/site/resources](http://www.dyingmatters.org/site/resources) or hard copies are available by calling freephone 08000 21 44 66 or emailing [info@dyingmatters.org](mailto:info@dyingmatters.org)

## Websites

- 1 Dying Matters funeral information [www.dyingmatters.org/page/funerals](http://www.dyingmatters.org/page/funerals)
- 2 Age UK's fact-sheet Planning a funeral [www.ageuk.org.uk](http://www.ageuk.org.uk)
- 3 If I Should Die [www.ifishoulddie.co.uk](http://www.ifishoulddie.co.uk)
- 4 Funerals UK [www.uk-funerals.co.uk](http://www.uk-funerals.co.uk)
- 5 Direct Gov [www.direct.gov.uk/en/GovernmentCitizensandRights/Death/WhatToDoAfterADeath/DG\\_10029667](http://www.direct.gov.uk/en/GovernmentCitizensandRights/Death/WhatToDoAfterADeath/DG_10029667)

## Books

- The Natural Death Handbook [www.naturaldeath.org.uk](http://www.naturaldeath.org.uk)
- The Dead Good Funerals Book and We Need to Talk About the Funeral. Both titles are available at [www.amazon.co.uk](http://www.amazon.co.uk)



## Footnotes

- 1 The Ultimate Distress Purchase: The Sun Life Direct Total Cost of Dying Survey (2010)
- 2 Dying Matters NatCen Omnibus Survey (September 2009)

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