



## Here for you day and night

Regent Funeral Services is located on the edge of Saltwell Park in Gateshead, next to Saltwell Crematorium and opposite Saltwell Cemetery.

This peaceful and private location provides a calm and tranquil environment for our Chapel of Rest and allows you to visit us without the added stress of a busy high street.

Parking is available on the street next to Regent Funeral Services and in the car parks inside Saltwell Park. Please contact us if you require special access.



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Regent Funeral Services is a company owned by Gateshead Council but independently run by highly experienced local funeral director Natalia McLackland and her professional team.



REGENT  
FUNERAL  
SERVICES

This guide is also available in different formats and languages, please call us if you require this.

Your guide to arranging a funeral

# Regent Funeral Services is here to help and make arrangements for the funeral as simple and straightforward as possible.

Dealing with the death of a loved one can be overwhelming, and many people find it difficult to know where to begin with the process of arranging a funeral. We are here to help you at a difficult time and are always available to discuss any decisions with you. This guide sets out the support and help we can offer, and the issues you need to consider when arranging a funeral service.

## Our promise to you

We will provide a full, seamless funeral service that is affordable, dignified and sensitive to your needs. Our job is to make arranging the funeral easy for you and our experienced team and I will go out of our way to help

you arrange the funeral you have in mind. We will listen to your needs, while providing outstanding service and value for money.



Natalia McLackland, Funeral Director



## WHAT YOU CAN EXPECT FROM US

We will:

- take good care of, and treat with respect, the person who has died.
- give you advice on anything that you need our support with, including flowers, newspaper announcements and donations to charities, stationery and memorials.
- make arrangements, with your preferred officiant and with the crematorium or local cemetery.

We will:

- help you with any special requests to ensure the day is exactly how you want it.
- support you on the day of the funeral and ensure everything runs smoothly.
- be open with costs and give advice on the best value option for the funeral you have in mind.
- give guidance on administrative details that you will need to consider - such as registering the death and dealing with legal matters.

## FIRST STEPS

It's usual for people to be unsure about what to do first after a loved one passes away. We'll advise you on the initial steps and what you need to think about following a death.

### REGISTERING A DEATH

The first thing you need to do is to register the person's death. This means arranging an appointment with the relevant registrar in the district where the death occurred. The appointment must be arranged within five days of the death (unless the circumstances of the death are being assessed by the coroner following a post mortem or inquest. In this case a funeral can't take place until the coroner has made a decision and the death can then be registered).

A relative would normally register the death, but it can be done by any person present at the death, the occupier of the premises where the death happened, or the person who is accepting responsibility for arranging the funeral. Your appointment with the registrar will be private and confidential, and you'll be able to ask them any questions you have about the process going forward.

There is no registration charge and the original death certificate is £11. Additional copies, if required, will cost £11 per copy.

#### You will need to bring the following documents with you to the appointment:

- The medical certificate issued by the doctor. Without it, the registrar will not be able to register the death. If the Coroner's Office has been involved, they will advise you about what to do as there may be additional paperwork needed.
- The deceased person's birth certificate or passport. This isn't essential but may speed up the process.
- The deceased person's medical card, National Insurance number, driving licence and any blue badges. Again, this is not essential but is helpful.

#### You will also be asked to provide the following information:

- The date and place of death.
- The full name, and any other names used, of the deceased (and maiden surname if this applies).
- The date and place of birth.
- Their occupation and, if the person was a married woman, the full name and occupation of her husband.
- Their usual address.
- Whether they received a private pension from public funds.
- If they were married, or in a civil partnership, plus the date of birth of their husband/wife or partner

## NOTIFYING AUTHORITIES

We understand that when making arrangements following the death of a loved one, the list of organisations to notify can be overwhelming.

But it's something you don't need to worry about.

### TELL US ONCE SERVICE

Telling lots of different organisations about your loved one's death is taken care of by the registrar, through the 'Tell Us Once' service, which is free of charge.

The registrar will ensure that the Department for Work and Pensions is notified and request that it passes this information to several other government departments and local council services that need to be notified on your behalf.

#### This service will automatically notify:

- Department for Work and Pensions
- Pension, Disability and Carers Service
- Jobcentre Plus
- Overseas Health Team
- Ministry of Defence, Service Personnel and Veterans Agency
- War Pensions Scheme
- HM Revenue and Custom.
- Child Benefit.
- Child Tax Credit & Working Tax Credit
- Personal Taxation
- Identity and Passport Service
- Housing Benefit Office
- Council Tax Benefit Office



#### Other organisations can also be contacted on your behalf, including:

- Local council (Council Housing, Council Tax, Libraries, Blue Badges, Adult Services, Children's Services, Collection of Payment for Council Services, Electoral Services).
- Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency

## BEFORE THE FUNERAL

There are a number of things you need to know or think about before the funeral takes place.

Again, we are here to help.

### LOOKING AFTER YOUR LOVED ONE

We will take care of your loved one with respect, care and professionalism. The deceased will be taken from their place of death and transported to our chapel of rest, located at our premises in Saltwell Park.

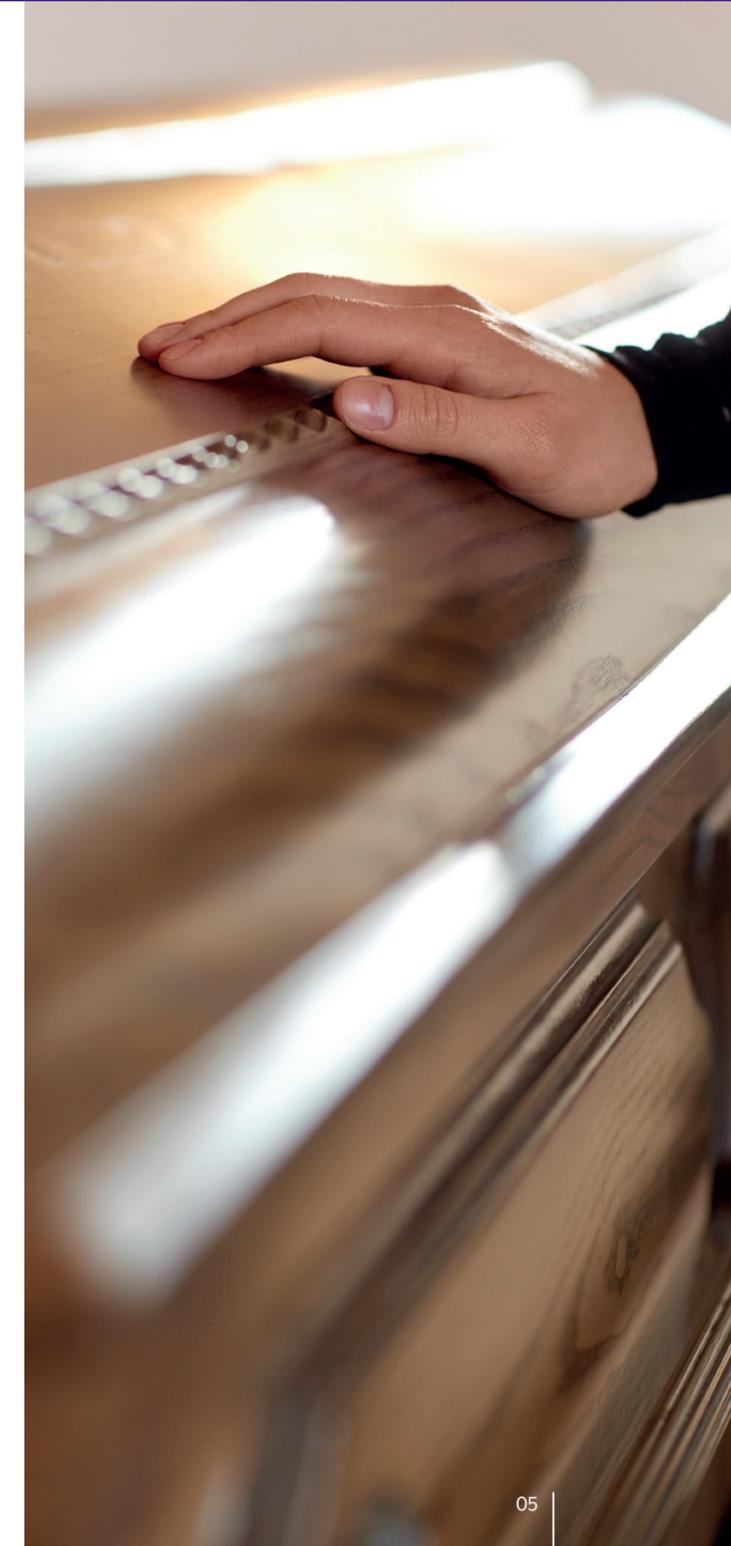
We can provide an embalming service if you wish. Embalming delays the natural processes that happen after a death and should be considered if you wish to visit the person at the chapel of rest. We wash and dress everyone in our care. If you would like to provide a favourite outfit for your loved one please let us know. Alternatively, we can provide a simple shroud.

### SPENDING TIME WITH THE DECEASED

Some people find that spending time with the deceased helps with the grieving process and wish to bring gifts or a photograph to put in the coffin. Others may find it upsetting - the choice is personal.

### TELLING OTHERS ABOUT THE DEATH

You may want to put an announcement in a local newspaper to inform people about the death and give them details of the funeral. We can help you with this if you require. It is also possible to place a thank you message in a newspaper to thank those who attended the funeral and left donations or flowers.



## ARRANGING A FUNERAL SERVICE

A funeral service is a way of saying goodbye to a loved one. We are here to support you, so that you can arrange the funeral you want.

### PLANS AND CHOICES

If the person who has died had a funeral plan, their instructions for the funeral will be recorded and you will need to provide us with the details.

Alternatively, they might have put their wishes in a will or talked to someone close to them about what they would like.

There are many choices to be made while planning a funeral, and if your loved one hasn't left a comprehensive funeral plan, you may be required to do this. These decisions are usually very personal and can be influenced by many different factors, including family tradition, religion, the wishes of the deceased, or the preferences of those left behind.

We can help you decide what type of funeral will be best for you and we have laid out the options available to you below.

### BURIAL

Ceremonies for all religious, non-religious and cultural traditions are available. If you opt for a burial you will be allocated the next available space in your chosen cemetery's plan, unless otherwise requested.

If you would like to specify a different position within the cemetery we can arrange for you to meet with the cemetery supervisor.

### CREMATION

Ceremonies for all religious, non-religious and cultural traditions are available on site at your chosen crematorium. Alternatively, the service may be held elsewhere with a committal - the concluding rite of the funeral service - held at the crematorium.

If you would like to hold the ceremony at the crematorium, an average service is approximately 20 minutes long with time allowed for entering and exiting the crematorium chapel. If you expect a high turnout, would like a longer service, or if you just want time to greet mourners at the end of the ceremony, then it is possible to extend the service time at an additional cost and depending on availability.

Facilities are provided at the crematoria to play virtually any piece of music, providing enough notice has been given prior to the service taking place. Shortly after the service, the coffin is placed into the cremator, individually. Relatives are welcome to watch the committal, if this has been agreed with the crematorium staff ahead of the ceremony.

Following the cremation, you can choose either to have the ashes scattered in the crematorium's Garden of Remembrance or to have them collected by the funeral director and given to you in a plastic urn to keep at home so you can make your own arrangements.

### DIRECT CREMATION

We also provide a direct cremation option with minimal cost outlay and no services or ceremony performed before the cremation. You may also hear direct cremation referred to as immediate cremation, basic cremation or simple cremation.

Direct cremation involves no funeral service. There is no viewing of the deceased or farewell ceremony conducted. There are no mourners present. However, the funeral director will still be present during the committal process and may say a few words or play a short piece of music out of respect for the deceased.

No embalming is required before a direct cremation (if the deceased had a pace-maker or electrical device we will need to remove it). No expensive coffin is required for a direct cremation. Because there is no funeral service we use a simple wood effect coffin.

The cremation takes place at a facility convenient to the funeral provider which will not necessarily be local to you. You won't be able to choose the time, location or date of the cremation, although we will always ask whether there are special dates such as birthdays or anniversaries you'd like us to avoid.

### DIFFERENT CULTURES

It's important to know that we can arrange funerals for all cultures and religions.

This includes:

- Church of England
- Catholic
- Islamic
- Hindu
- Buddhist
- Jewish

*We can also arrange non-religious funerals.*

### SIMPLE FUNERAL OPTION

Our Simple Funeral Option provides a limited, low cost service that includes:

- bringing the deceased into our care;
- looking after the person who has died and arranging a simple funeral;
- providing a hearse and transporting the deceased to the nearest crematorium or cemetery;
- providing a simple coffin; and
- a funeral service.



## PERSONAL TOUCHES AND DETAILS

We need to know the personal touches and any special arrangements you would like when it comes to the details of the funeral service. We will go out of our way to help you arrange the funeral you have in mind for your loved one.

Funerals are very personal and emotional experiences and each one is different in order to reflect the person who has died, and the needs of the family organising the service. From flowers, music, readings and more, we can make sure you get the service you want. If what you require is not mentioned below, just ask and we'll do our best to help.

### VENUE & DATE OF THE SERVICE

A funeral service can be held in any suitable venue, although many people choose to have the service in a church or crematorium chapel. It is also possible to hold the service in a private home or a public room. We will work with you to arrange a suitable date and time.

### CHOOSING A COFFIN, CASKET OR URN

You will need to make a decision on the type of coffin, casket, or urn you want. We have a range you can choose from, and can discuss your favoured option when you make the arrangements.

### FLOWERS

Another way of making a funeral more personal is to have the favourite flowers of the person who has died. We can offer a variety of different floral arrangements and have a florist available to help you. Sending flowers can also be a healing gesture for people who have lost someone close. We collect the cards from the wreaths and bouquets and give them to you to keep. We are also able to collect donations for you and record who they have been given by.

### MUSIC

You can include the favourite music of the person who has died, and we can advise on this. Most music can be played at the funeral as long as copyright restrictions do not apply. You can choose a hymn, play a CD, or have a favourite song or piece of music downloaded at the crematorium, and you can also have live music.

If you want to have an organist you should ensure that they are able to play the music you have chosen. Alternatively, we can arrange this on your behalf or something similar, such as a piper or choir.

### WHO WILL LEAD THE SERVICE?

If a funeral is held in a church, the minister will of that church will lead the service and they will tell you what you can and can't do in their church.

If you would like a religious service at the crematorium, your local minister will also be able to lead the service there for you. The crematorium chapel can also host a service that is not religious, which would involve a civil celebrant or humanist officiant. In theory, anyone can lead a funeral service, whether they are religious or not. It could even be a relative or someone you know if that's what you choose.

### READINGS

Typically, services include a mix of readings or prayers, poetry and passages. The person leading the service or a close friend or relative will usually say something about the person who has died. Make sure that whoever is delivering the main tribute knows some personal details about the person who has died.

You can discuss this with the minister or celebrant and they will guide you through it.

### ORDER OF SERVICE AND THANK YOU CARDS

You may want to provide an order of service - these are helpful for mourners and you may want to send a copy to people who can't make the service. This can include the hymns or songs, readings and any other information that you would like. We can arrange to do this for you.

After the funeral we can organise thank you cards for you to send to people who gave flowers and donations. We can arrange to design and print both the order of service and thank you cards for you at a cost.

### TRANSPORT ARRANGEMENTS

The hearse will take the coffin to the funeral service on the day. The hearse is usually followed by limousines which carry close members of family. Please let us know if there is a particular route you would like the procession to take.

Additional limousines can be arranged should you wish to carry more people in the procession. A horse-drawn hearse can also be arranged for those who want a traditional style of funeral. The horses are presented to a high standard, complete with a leather harness, traditional collar and plume.

### SPECIAL ARRANGEMENTS

People sometimes like to add further personal touches to reflect the life of the person who has died. Other arrangements that you might wish to consider include:

### WOODLAND BURIALS

Woodland burials are becoming increasingly popular and we will be able to tell you the location of your nearest woodland burial site. A wide variety of eco-friendly, biodegradable coffins are available for woodland burials. Memorials and headstones are not usually permitted but often trees can be planted to mark the grave.

### MOTORCYCLE FUNERALS

A motorcycle hearse is appropriate at a funeral for those whose passion in life was motorcycles and is a dignified way of showing the deceased's character.

### RELEASING WHITE DOVES

The release of white doves at funerals and memorial services is a very popular way of adding a special touch to a funeral ceremony. Releasing white doves signifies letting go and is a good start to the grieving process.

Once you have decided exactly what you would like, we will discuss the costs with you and provide a written estimate and then proceed to make the arrangements. Throughout the process we will be open with costs and try to provide you with the best options.

## THE DAY OF THE FUNERAL

All the arrangements have been made, and the day of the funeral has arrived. Everyone at Regent Funeral Services will ensure that this goes as smoothly as possible providing the dignified and sensitive service you expect.

Generally, there is no set procedure for a funeral and it depends on the options selected.

However, traditionally the procession starts at the house of the person who has died, or sometimes a funeral home, with the coffin and cars travelling to the funeral service.

The coffin arrives at the location of the funeral service and close family members usually follow it and sit at the front of the venue. In the case of a burial, the coffin will then be taken to the grave and lowered into the grave while a short service is held.

For a cremation, the coffin will be taken to the crematorium and placed on a stand in view of the attendees. Towards the end of the service music is played and traditionally the coffin disappears from view.

After the funeral, friends and family are usually invited for refreshments. This typically takes place at the house of a close family member or at a local venue.

## MEMORIALS

There may still be some things you will need to organise after the funeral is over. We will be in contact with you a few days after the funeral to see if there is anything else we can help you with.

One thing you might want to consider is a memorial. This can be anything from physical memorial sites, to an entry into a book of remembrance or an online memorial.

You might want to consider a memorial gravestone if the person who has died has been buried. If it is a family grave, you may want to have the inscription updated, or replace the memorial if it is damaged. Each cemetery has its own rules about when a gravestone can be put in and some insist on waiting at least six months for the ground to settle.

If the person has been cremated there are usually a range of memorials available at the local crematorium's Garden of Remembrance.

You may choose to have the ashes buried in a churchyard or cemetery, while some people prefer to scatter or bury their loved one's ashes in a particular spot in their garden or a place they loved. If you do not own the place you want the ashes to be scattered then you will have to gain permission from the landowner or the relevant authority.

We also have a range of ashes containers and urns and we can show you a number of different options which will allow you to keep the ashes at home.

## PAYING FOR THE FUNERAL

The cost of the funeral will depend on the option you discussed and agreed with us.

Once the funeral arrangements have been discussed you will be given a written confirmation and a full, clear estimate showing a breakdown of our costs and any third party payments that we would make on your behalf.

These could include; cremation or burial fees, officiant fees, doctor's fees (where applicable), notice in the paper, flowers and catering. Payment terms are dependent on your selected funeral option.

For a direct cremation or a simple funeral, we would require full payment before booking the funeral.

For any other packages or personal choice funerals we would require at least the total of the third-party costs before the funeral. We would send out an invoice for any remaining payments for our services after the funeral.

If you wish to pay the full funeral balance before the funeral, you will receive a discount of 2.5% off the full balance (there is no discount available on a direct cremation or a simple funeral).

## HELP WITH THE COST OF THE FUNERAL

While we aim to provide services at the lowest rates, we know that sometimes people require help to pay for the costs associated with a loved one's passing. If you could benefit from financial assistance at this difficult time, there are several options available to you which could provide a helping hand.

Please ask us about these.

- Funeral Payments from the Social Fund
- Bereavement Allowance (previously Widow's Pension)
- Bereavement Payment
- Budgeting Loans
- Council Funeral - also known as 'Pauper's Funeral'

