

FUNERAL PREPARATION & SUPPORT



Prepared for Settled by Swan Ceremonies

Below are some comments and questions about the ceremony, celebration of life memorial or funeral service that you are creating. This will enable you to begin to create an outline order of what you would like to happen and when.

Questions you may want to ask?

1. What name was the deceased best known by? *People have a range of different names they are referred to by. Elizabeth may be Lizzy, Bet, Mum, Nanny, and may have a nickname.*
2. Who are the deceased's immediate family and friends? *Write them down with contact details.*
3. Would you describe the service as religious or non-religious? *It may be helpful to ask "Do you think of the gathering as a service or a celebration of life". Underpinning this question is an understanding of the beliefs of the deceased, and of those close to the deceased, which may be quite different. Someone might be an agnostic, a member of a faith community, atheist, humanist, spiritual but not religious. The options are many..*
5. What sort of numbers do you anticipate attending (just a rough idea)?
6. Are they likely to be any family bearers? *Those who carry the coffin into the ceremonial hall, faith building, or elsewhere. People can find this helpful as part of the grieving process.*
7. Will there be a reception/wake and if yes will that be open for the congregation or a private reception for the immediate family?
8. Have you nominated any charity? *If you don't, sometimes people will turn up with flowers that you may just feel are not appropriate.*
9. If you use a crematorium would you like the coffin to be lowered or curtains drawn?
10. Is there a colour or dress theme for the ceremony? What would you like the Celebrant/Faith Leader to wear?
11. Would you like the coffin to be dressed with a flag (*e.g. because the person was in the police or armed services*) or have other objects of significance placed on the coffin (*e.g. Shoes/football scarf/banner/hobby, photo*).

12. Would you require that the Funeral Director will prepare a printed Order of Service? Or would one of the bereaved like to take this on?

13. Would you like the service to be webcasted or recorded if possible?

14. Amongst those attending the ceremony are there any particular requirements that need to be considered e.g. Languages, Hearing, Access.

15 How can we involve children or young people if not attending, and those unable to come because of distance or age? *For example, children might like pressed flowers to keep in a memory box. There are many other ideas that we have at Swan that could be useful.*

16. What music might be included?

17. Who should deliver the tribute? Please take a look at Swan Ceremonies guidance on, 'HOW TO PREPARE A TRIBUTE'

18. What other elements might be included?

19. If the deceased is to be cremated, what will happen to the ashes?

20. We need to be aware that Government guidance is constantly changing. For latest updates please visit [COVID-19: guidance for arranging or attending a funeral during the coronavirus pandemic](#). Please be aware that crematoriums and venues may set their own restrictions.

Given the information that emerges from this time of reflection, you may now want to consider what format should the ceremony/service take? *Should there be a direct cremation one day and a celebration of life on another?* **At Swan we have many examples of how families and friends can say goodbye to the one they love and have been loved by.**

And where should the events be held? Faith building, theatre, open air, what is right for the person who has died and those attending.

If you would like us to help you with this process you can use one of our plans, Silver, Gold or Platinum. They range in price from £60 to £150. We think that with this material and our guidance on tributes we have got you off to a good start. This may be all you need. But sometimes a helping hand can make the difference. You may want to try our SENSE test, which is our way of testing out whether the ceremony is as perfect as it can be. We will advise you which one of our plans could be right for you. Our contact details are:

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