

Our family, here for your family

We are a privately owned and managed family funeral business with over 65 years experience, assisted by like minded and highly enthusiastic principals and staff. We have no connection with any business outside the Sandra Homewood Group. We provide our team with training, a quality working environment, strong leadership and fairness. Our values are based on providing excellent service to our clients, transparency, fairness, good value and honesty.



When Someone Dies

Often death can be a great shock, even if the death was expected, and the emotional impact of losing someone that you care about, takes most of us by surprise.

We cannot take the pain or hurt away from you, but we will do everything we can to help you through the next few days, weeks and beyond if requested to do so, by providing you with informed choices, practical help and emotional support.

We do not impose urgency or apply pressure on you or your family. It is important that you have the time to reflect and then to decide how you wish the funeral to be arranged so it both celebrates and commemorates the life of your loved one who has died.

Below are some practical notes which we hope are of help at this time when suddenly everything is different, and you may require information you have not found or needed to use before.

Making Funeral Arrangements

Our professional service to you commences when we are contacted either by phone at any time of the day or night, or by you visiting our funeral home personally.

At the point of first contact, we would ask you for a few details, the name of the person who has died and where death has occurred. We would also like to take your name and contact phone number.

If appropriate and we have been instructed, we would then arrange to transfer the person who has died into our care as soon as practically possible.

After this initial contact we will either arrange for one of us to come and visit you or make an appointment for you to see us in the funeral home to discuss the arrangements for the funeral, and to provide more detailed information.

(Sometimes it is possible that you can be seen without an appointment but it is usually best to phone before making the journey to see us)

What to do when you are Bereaved

If the death occurs at home, contact the GP as soon as possible, or if it is a nursing home the staff will notify the GP on your behalf. If the death occurs in hospital, the Bereavement Office will contact you to discuss the next steps.

Medical Examiner

All deaths in England and Wales not investigated by a coroner must be independently reviewed by a medical examiner.

Once the relevant attending practitioner and the medical examiner have completed their declarations and the cause of death is confirmed, the MCCD will be sent to the registrar by the medical examiner.

HM Coroner

The coroner investigates any deaths which appear to be due to violence, are unnatural, are of sudden and of unknown cause or occur in legal custody.

Enquiries not requiring an inquest

If a death is reported which does not need an inquest - when death resulted from natural causes - a certificate giving the cause of death will be sent to the registrar of deaths.

Inquests

The medical and legal enquiry held in public is called an inquest. It is not a trial, it is aimed at finding out who the deceased was, and how, when and where they died.

At the end of the session, the next of kin will be provided with an explanation about how, where and when a copy of the death certificate can be obtained.

Registration

It is a legal requirement to register a death within five calendar days of the Coroner or Medical Examiner sending the relevant paperwork to the Register Office.

The Coroner or Medical Examiner will notify the family of the deceased person when this has been done, so that an appointment to register the death can be booked.

Who can register the death

A relative or partner of the deceased person should register the death.

If there is no relative or partner who can register the death, the following people can register:

- someone who was present at the death
- the person who is arranging the funeral is in charge of making and paying for funeral arrangements (this cannot be a funeral director)
- the occupier of the establishment where the death took place, such as an administrator from the hospital (if the person died in hospital)
- a 'representative of the deceased' (a person appointed by and acting on behalf of the family)

The information you will need to give the registrar

About the deceased:

- the date and place of death
- their full name and any other names they are known by or have been known by (including the maiden name of a woman who has been married)
- their sex
- their date and place of birth
- their occupation, or most recent occupation if they were retired
- if married, widowed, or a civil partner, the full name and occupation of their husband, wife or civil partner
- their usual address

- date of birth of surviving husband, wife or civil partner
- whether they were in receipt of any public sector pension, e.g. civil service, teacher, armed forces

About the person registering:

- your relationship to the deceased
- your full name
- your usual address

What to take to the appointment

The registrar will record information directly from the person attending the appointment. It is helpful to take the deceased's documents, such as their passport, birth or marriage/civil partnership certificates, and name change deeds. These documents can help verify details like place of birth and name spelling.

If you can't access these documents, you can still complete the registration without them.

The documents that are issued:

Certificate for burial or cremation

After recording the information in the death register, the registrar will issue a certificate for burial or cremation, known as Form 9 or the green form. With your permission, the registrar can email this form directly to the funeral director unless the coroner has already provided the necessary paperwork for the burial or cremation.

Death certificates

You may need death certificates to administer the Will or probate and notify banks, building societies, and insurance companies. There is a charge for each copy of the Death Certificate.

If you want a death certificate issued at the appointment, you must pay when booking your appointment using your debit or credit card.

Alternatively, you can order certificates after the appointment. They are usually posted to you within 15 days of ordering.

Tell Us Once

The registrar will provide you with a unique reference number which will enable you to access the Tell Us Once service.

You can use this to inform multiple local and central government departments of the death in one contact. You can access the service online or by telephone after the registration appointment.

Visiting the Quiet Room at our Funeral Home

Relatives and friends often wish to say their goodbyes in our Quiet Room.

We would ask that you make an appointment(s) prior to visiting so that we ensure that your loved one is ready for your visit, and you are not hurried in any way. Our visiting times allow an hour of privacy.

Funeral Costs, Charges and Disbursements

Please refer to our printed price list for the costs of our professional services and funeral charges.

If you need further clarification or advice regarding our prices please do not hesitate to ask.

In addition to our charges, we pay on your behalf any additional fees or disbursements to third parties to enable the funeral service to take place.

For example, the fees of a Minister, Priest or Officiant, the organist and the vergers if we are going into a Church, together with the Cemetery or the Crematorium fees.

Our Principals

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Our Staff and Vehicles:

The hearse and following limousine/s on the day are an important part of the service that we offer to our bereaved families.

All of our staff wear uniforms and where ever possible our fleet comprises of matching vehicles.

Our staff normally carry the coffin in the traditional way on their shoulders. This we believe is the ultimate way to show respect and reverence to the person we have been entrusted to look after.

If it is wished that family members are to act as coffin bearers, then our full staff will still attend to advise and assist them. Please note if the deceased is to be buried, our experienced staff will resume their duties at the graveside, as a matter of safety, and we would ask family members to fully respect this point.

Consult a Solicitor

It is generally advisable to contact a Solicitor who can help with any concerns you may have. They can advise and assist with Wills, problems of intestacy, debts, letters of representation and other important matters.

If a Will has been made it may be with personal papers, the contents can then be checked quickly to ensure that we are carrying out their wishes.

If the Deceased has contacted a Solicitor in recent times it is important that you contact them as soon as possible.

A Solicitor may save you time, money and avoid unnecessary trouble.

We can provide you with a list of local Solicitors if requested, however the executor/s can deal with Probate matters if preferred.

Probate

When a person dies, somebody has to deal with their Estate, including their money, property and possessions. They have to pay all the debts of the Estate and distribute the funds of the Estate to those entitled in accordance with the Will

The Probate Registry issues the document called the Grant of Representation

There are three types of grant:

- Probate issued to one or more executors named in the Will
- Letters of Administration (with a Will) when there is a Will but no executor named or the executor is unable to deal with the Estate
- Letter of Administration, where no Will has been left or the Will that has been left is invalid

The Grant is necessary because:

Organisations holding money in the Deceased's name need to know to whom the money is to be paid. The distribution of the Estate is the responsibility of the Person named on the deed.

Sometimes the Grant is not necessary if the Estate is of small value and there are no complications. It is prudent to check with the Probate Office in all cases first as legislation can change.

Memorials

After making arrangements for the funeral, thoughts may turn to a lasting tribute. A memorial or headstone is one of the ways that this can be done.

If we have removed an existing memorial to allow a further burial to take place, we send you a comprehensive report on the memorial that has been removed and will then await your instructions on a further inscription and any cleaning or restoration work that is required.

For new graves, or graves that are re-opened that do not have a stone, we will send you our memorial brochure and price list after a few weeks, unless you request us not to do so.

We are happy to discuss all memorial matters at any time during office hours.

There is also comprehensive memorial information on our website at homewoodfunerals.co.uk

Donations to Charity

If donations are requested in lieu of flowers we will accept and administer them on your behalf through MuchLoved.com within our standard professional fees. If alternative arrangements for the administration of donations are requested, there will normally be a charge for this service.

Help with the Costs

You may be eligible to receive help with the funeral costs if there is not enough money to pay for the funeral and you are responsible for making the arrangements.

The Department of Work and Pensions (DWP) may assist if you or your partner are receiving Income Support, Housing Benefit, Family Credit or Council Tax Benefit. There is no guarantee that DWP will contribute towards the funeral account.

So please check to see if there are sufficient funds from:

- The Estate of the person who has died
- Any savings in your name or that of your Spouse/Partner
- Insurance policies, pension schemes or other funeral savings plans
- A Pre-Paid Funeral Plan

Please note if you instruct us to make all the necessary funeral arrangements on your behalf, then you are taking financial responsibility for settling the funeral account in full.

If you know that you will experience financial hardship in meeting the cost of the funeral, please advise us when instructing us. We are here to help and guide you as much as we can.

Thank you, from the Principals of Sandra Homewood Funerals.

