

An extract from the Charter for the Bereaved

Funerals without a Funeral Director

1 INFORMATION

It is often assumed, quite wrongly, that funerals can be completed only with the use of a Funeral Director. Although a Funeral Director will be invited to organise the majority of funerals, some people prefer to organise funerals themselves. The details in the individual sections of the Charter give sufficient information to achieve this. Your Charter member will also supply you with a leaflet giving you local information.

The Funeral Director organises the funeral by collecting and moving the body, arranging embalming (if required) and viewing of the deceased, ensuring that statutory certificates and other information is relayed to the cemetery or crematorium office. They provide a coffin, hearse and liaise with the cemetery or crematorium office regarding the service in the chapel or at the graveside. Carrying out these services relieves the bereaved from doing what they may feel are unpleasant and difficult tasks at a difficult time.

Some people do not wish to use a Funeral Director. This can be for a wide variety of reasons. They may feel that passing the body of a loved one over to strangers is wrong. Some feel that personally organising the funeral is their final tribute to the deceased person. Others may simply wish to save money by doing everything themselves.

The bereaved family can handle the entire funeral and Charter members are able to assist in facilitating this. Such a funeral is referred to as "Family Arranged", rather than the possibly offensive term "DIY" funeral.

2. CHARTER RIGHTS

- a) It is your right to organise a funeral without the use of a Funeral Director.
- b) It is your right, as executor (or next of kin) to be given the body by a mortuary, hospital, etc, in order to carry out a funeral without a Funeral Director.
- c) It is your right to obtain information from your Charter member on how to obtain a coffin (minimum biodegradable type).
- d) It is your right to obtain a Family Arranged Funeral leaflet from your Charter member describing how to arrange such a funeral

3. CHARTER TARGETS

- a) Charter members should ensure that the bereaved are aware of these rights,
- b) Charter members should increase coffin choice wherever possible. Coffins need not be stocked, provided a reliable source is identified. Where green burial options are offered, a biodegradable coffin should be available.