



Copeland
borough council



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Public Health Funerals Explained

www.copeland.gov.uk

How and why Copeland Borough Council arranges public health funerals and what to expect

Public health funerals are a simple, basic funeral service provided by local authorities in circumstances where the cost of a funeral cannot be covered by family members or recovered from the deceased's estate.

Who is entitled to a public health funeral?

Every local authority in the UK is required by law to arrange funerals for people who die within their borough where there are no relatives willing or financially able to arrange the funeral themselves, or where no funeral arrangements have been made for that person because the next of kin cannot be traced.

The legislation that governs this is Section 46 of the Public Health Act 1984.

Copeland Borough Council will only take on cases where the deceased has died within the borough of Copeland, and only in circumstances where family/friends have not already entered into an agreement with a Funeral Director.

In cases where the deceased has left a Will, it is the duty of the Executor to arrange and pay for the funeral, and Copeland Borough Council will have no further involvement.

Who pays for a public health funeral?

The cost of the funeral is taken from the estate of the deceased. Their estate includes money in bank, building society or other financial accounts, as well as personal possessions such as property, jewellery, antiques or any other items of value. Copeland Borough Council may be required to carry out a search of the deceased's property to secure these items in order to offset the funeral costs.

Before contacting Copeland Borough Council and opting for a public health funeral, it is important to consider the other ways in which you may be able to access help towards funeral costs. For example, the deceased may have a funeral plan which covers the funeral expenses.

If you are claiming certain benefits, you may be eligible for financial help from the Department of Work and Pensions by means of a Funeral Expenses Payment. This covers some of the costs involved in arranging a funeral, and Copeland Borough Council asks that you contact the Department of Work and Pensions in the first instance to discuss your options.

The Department of Work and Pensions can be contacted on 0800 731 0469, or further information can be found at www.gov.uk/funeral-payments

What to expect from a public health funeral provided by Copeland Borough Council

If a public health funeral should go ahead, Copeland Borough Council will provide a dignified but basic cremation service at Distington Hall Crematorium. A fixed service package will be arranged by the Bereavement Services team .

What to expect from a public health funeral provided by Copeland Borough Council

Included

- The services of a Funeral Director chosen by Copeland Borough Council
- A simple coffin
- Transport of the deceased to the crematorium
- A minister/celebrant
- Appropriate music for entering and exiting the chapel, chosen by Copeland Borough Council

Not Included

- Flowers
- Viewings
- Notices in local newspapers
- Music choices
- Organist
- Visual tributes
- Eulogies read by family/friends during the service
- Transport to/from the crematorium for family members
- Choosing the deceased's attire
- Personal mementos inside the coffin
- Funeral teas

Cremated remains will be returned to the family following the cremation service if they so wish, otherwise they will be strewn in the grounds of Distington Hall Crematorium which will be their final resting place.

Where religious beliefs dictate otherwise, a graveside service will be provided within a public grave in Whitehaven Cemetery. This grave will be shared with others and no memorial or headstone will be permitted. If you would like to speak to a member of the Bereavement Services Team at Copeland Borough Council for further information, please call 01946 830561 or email distingtonhalladmin@copeland.gov.uk