

# When someone dies



A step-by-step guide  
to what to do

# Information written with you in mind.

This information guide has been produced with the help of older people and carers as well as expert peer reviewers.

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## What this guide is about

**When someone dies there are things that have to be done. This often needs doing at an incredibly difficult time when we feel least able to manage.**

For some, this is a welcome distraction as it gives them something to do to stay busy. While for others, it's the last thing they want to think about. However you approach it, it can seem overwhelming.

This guide gives practical information about where to start and what to get done first, how to register the death and how to arrange a funeral. It also covers who to tell about the death and advice about financial and emotional support that may be available.

Where possible, the information given in this guide is applicable across the UK.



This symbol indicates where information differs for Wales, Northern Ireland and Scotland.

“When my husband died I knew there were things I needed to do, but I didn’t really know where to start.”

Kate, 72



## Good to know



This guide covers the practical things you have to get done when someone dies and how to go about them. However, it’s often not that simple, as this is a highly emotional time. Some of these emotions can feel more intense when arranging some of the practical bits, such as planning the funeral.

How we deal with the death of someone close to us is very personal. Our **Bereavement guide** focuses on the emotional impact felt when someone dies. It helps explain some of the emotions you may be experiencing, why you might be experiencing them and some of the emotional support that’s available to help you now and in the future.

You can call **0800 169 65 65** to order this guide or download it from our website at **[www.ageuk.org.uk/publications](http://www.ageuk.org.uk/publications)**.



## What to do first

At this emotional time, knowing where to start can be tricky. There's lots to wrap your head around. But when someone dies there are a few things that need to be done straight away.

### After a death

**If someone dies at home and their death was expected**, for example because of a terminal illness, you should call their GP practice and nearest relative (if that's not you). The doctor will issue a medical certificate, which states the cause of death. You'll also be given a formal notice stating the medical certificate has been signed. This tells you how to register the death. Once the doctor has issued the medical certificate, and when you are ready to do so, you can call a funeral director of your choice who will move the body to a funeral home.

**If someone dies at home unexpectedly**, call 111 straight away and ask for advice. It's possible an unexpected death may need to be reported to a coroner (procurator fiscal in Scotland). A coroner is a doctor or lawyer responsible for investigating unexpected deaths. The coroner may call for a post-mortem or inquest to determine the cause of death. If a death is reported to a coroner, you can't register the death until they give you permission to do so. The funeral may need to be delayed.

**If the person dies in hospital**, the hospital supports you with the steps you need to take and issues the medical certificate and formal notice (which explains how to register the death). The body is usually moved to the hospital mortuary until the funeral director or relatives arrange a chapel of rest, or for the body to be taken home.

**“My sister died while she was in hospital. The staff helped us with what we had to do next.”**

Stuart, 68



## Next steps



For more information, see **GOV.UK**. In Scotland, ask the registrar or contact Age Scotland for a copy of the Scottish government's booklet **What to do after a death in Scotland** (page 35). In Northern Ireland, visit **[www.nidirect.gov.uk](http://www.nidirect.gov.uk)** (page 37).

# How to register a death

You must register the death with the registrar of births, marriages and deaths. You need to do this within five days of the death, unless the death has been referred to the coroner.

Ideally it should be a relative who registers the death. If a relative can't register the death, someone else can if they:

- were there when the person died
- are responsible for arranging the funeral
- are an administrator from the hospital (if the person died in hospital).

To register a death you can go to any register office. Many offices require you to make an appointment, so it's best to phone in advance to check. If you go to an office in the area where the person died, you'll be given the documents you need that day. If you go to an office in a different area, the office will forward the documents to the office in the area where the death occurred.



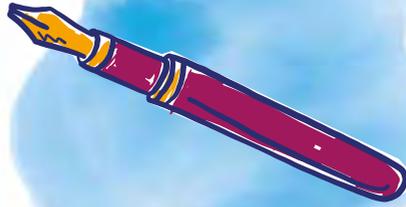
In Scotland, it must be done within eight days of the death and you can go to any registration district.

In Northern Ireland, you need to go to any district registration office within five days of the death. See nidirect website (page 37) for a list of district registration offices.

## Next steps



To find your local register office you can visit the government website at [www.gov.uk/register-offices](http://www.gov.uk/register-offices).



### To register a death the registrar will need:

- the medical certificate showing the cause of death, signed by a doctor
- the full name of the person who's died (and any other names they once had, such as a maiden name)
- the date and place of death
- the usual address of the person who's died
- their date and place of birth (if this was outside of the UK, you only need to state the country)
- their most recent occupation
- to know whether or not the person who has died was receiving a pension or other benefits
- the name, occupation and date of birth of their spouse or civil partner, if they had one.

**“When Mum died, me and my brother went together to register the death. I couldn't face doing it by myself.”**

Sara, 51



## If you have the following documents, you could also take them with you:

- their medical card or NHS number
- their passport
- their driving licence
- their birth and marriage or civil partnership certificates
- proof of their address, such as a utility bill or Council Tax bill.

## The registrar will give you:

- **a certificate for burial or cremation** (known as a Green Form in England and Wales, Form 14 in Scotland, and Form GR021 in Northern Ireland), which gives permission for burial or for an application for cremation to be made.
- **a certificate of registration of death** (Form BD8 in England and Wales, Form 3344SI in Scotland or Form 36/BD8 in Northern Ireland). If the person who died was receiving any benefits or State Pension, you can use this form to ensure that those payments are adjusted. This won't be necessary if you use the Government's Tell Us Once service for England, Scotland and Wales (page 38). In Northern Ireland, you can contact the Bereavement Service to report the death of someone who was receiving social security benefits (page 36).
- **leaflets about bereavement benefits** for widows, widowers and surviving civil partners, if appropriate.
- **a death certificate**, for which there will be a charge. This is a certified copy of what is written in the death register and is needed for the will and any claims to pensions or savings. It may be best to pay for several certified copies at this time, as additional copies requested at a later date will be more expensive. Photocopies are not accepted by some organisations, such as banks or life insurance companies.



## Registering a death abroad

If someone dies abroad, you should register the death according to the local regulations of the country. Also register it with the British Consul in the country where the person died and get a consulate death certificate, so that a record can be kept in the UK.

**“Mum and Dad lived in Spain together. Mum’s come back to live near us now, but she had to register the death there.”**

Shane, 44



### Good to know



It’s a good idea to pay for a few extra copies of the death certificate as it will be needed when sorting out the estate of the person who has died.

## Organ donation and medical research

If the person who died carried a donor card, was listed on the NHS Organ Donor Register or told you or someone else that they wanted their organs to be donated after their death, then you should tell the hospital staff, GP or coroner's office. The sooner you tell them, the more likely it is that the person's wishes will be carried out, as organs need to be donated quickly. You can call the NHS Organ Donor Line (page 40) to check if someone was on the register.



If the person lived in Wales and was over 18, their consent to donate their organs is assumed unless they opted out. Contact Age Cymru for further information (page 35).

The person may have made a special request to have their body donated for medical research. For this to happen they must have made arrangements in writing with their nearest medical school and told their family and GP. When the person dies, their family should contact the medical school for advice. The Human Tissue Authority provides contact details for medical schools (page 38).

If the death has to be reported to the coroner (procurator fiscal in Scotland), you may need their consent for the person's wishes to be carried out.

### Good to know



From spring 2020, the law in England is changing. All adults will be considered organ donors unless they opted out or are in one of the excluded groups. You can find out more about this change at [www.organdonation.nhs.uk](http://www.organdonation.nhs.uk).

# Who to tell about the death

When someone dies, there are a number of government departments you must inform. You could use the Tell Us Once service to contact several departments in one go.

## Tell Us Once

This service is offered by most local councils in England, Wales and Scotland. You can arrange for an appointment to take place when you register the death, during which the relevant departments and services will be notified. If you prefer, you can also access the service online or over the phone. You'll need a unique reference number from the registrar to do this.

The departments you can contact in one go include:

- local services such as electoral services, housing benefit and council tax services
- HM Passport Office
- the Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency (DVLA)
- the Department for Work and Pensions
- HMRC for tax purposes.
- the Blue Badge scheme.

If your local council doesn't offer this service, you'll need to contact these departments yourself. You can go online at [www.gov.uk/after-a-death/tax-benefits-vehicles](http://www.gov.uk/after-a-death/tax-benefits-vehicles) for more information on what you need to do.

You'll need to return the driving licence of the person who has died to the DVLA and their passport to HM Passport Office (pages 37 and 38).

## Other organisations to contact

You may need to contact other organisations, including:

- personal or occupational pension scheme providers
- insurance companies
- banks and building societies
- mortgage providers, housing associations or council housing offices
- social services, or the social work department in Scotland, if the person was getting any community care services or equipment
- utility companies
- employers or trade unions
- GP, dentist, optician and anyone else providing medical care.

If the person left a will and named an executor, that person is likely to take on these tasks. The role of the executor is to deal with the money, property and possessions, known as the estate, of the person who died.

You can also register the name and address of the person who has died with the Bereavement Register, which removes their details from mailing lists and stops most advertising mail (page 36).





### **Powers of attorney**

If the person had a registered lasting power of attorney or enduring power of attorney and you were the attorney, send the original document and a death certificate to the Office of the Public Guardian in England and Wales (page 40).



In Northern Ireland, send it to the Office of Care and Protection (page 40). In Scotland, if the person had a power of attorney, notify the Office of the Public Guardian for Scotland in writing, enclosing a copy of the death certificate (page 40).

**“I looked after my husband’s finances as he lived with Alzheimer’s for the last few years of his life.”**

Roz, 70





## The funeral

The person who died may have left funeral instructions in their will or a letter about their wishes. They may have made a specific request – for example, a woodland burial or a coffin made of particular materials. However, if there are no clear wishes, the executor of the will or nearest relative usually decides on funeral arrangements and whether the body is to be cremated or buried. If the person had certain religious or cultural beliefs, you may want to reflect these in the service.

## Arranging the funeral

Before cremation can take place, a number of forms should be completed. These include a certificate from a doctor, which is also signed by another doctor, and an application form completed by a relative or executor of the will. These forms are available from the funeral director.

## Paying for a funeral

If you arrange the funeral, you are responsible for paying the bill so check first where the money will come from. The person who died may have paid into a life insurance policy or pension scheme that provides a lump sum towards funeral costs, or into a pre-paid funeral plan. Contact the Funeral Planning Authority (page 37) to find out if the person had a funeral plan with one of the main providers.

If the person who died left money, property or other assets, these can be used to pay for the funeral, as funeral costs come before paying off any debts. Sometimes banks and building societies will release money from the person's account to pay funeral costs if they see a certified copy of the death certificate, but they do not have to do this until probate (known as confirmation in Scotland) is granted. Probate is the legal process of distributing the estate of the person who has died. If there's a delay, you may need to pay the funeral costs yourself in the meantime.

**“My wife’s life insurance policy helped cover some of the funeral costs.”**

Bill, 81



## Using a funeral director

Ask funeral directors for quotations to help you decide which company to use. You should ask for an itemised quote that includes:

- the funeral director's services
- a coffin (there will be a range of prices and styles you can choose from)
- collection and care of the body
- a hearse to the nearest crematorium or cemetery
- all necessary arrangements and paperwork.

Funeral directors may ask for fees paid to third parties such as the crematorium, clergy and doctors – known as funeral disbursement costs – to be paid up-front. Ask the funeral director to explain these charges.

Be sure to choose a funeral director who's a member of a professional association, such as the National Association of Funeral Directors (page 39) or The National Society of Allied and Independent Funeral Directors (SAIF) (page 39).

If you don't want a public funeral, you could ask the funeral director about 'direct cremation'. This is where the body is collected from a mortuary and taken to the crematorium. It's less expensive, as there's no need for a hearse, no ceremony at the crematorium and the cremation takes place at a time convenient to the crematorium. You can then hold a commemorative ceremony at a time and place that suits you.

## Arranging a funeral without a funeral director

You don't have to use a funeral director when someone dies – some people now have 'do-it-yourself' funerals. This would involve more for you to organise, but can be less expensive and more environmentally friendly as well as more personal and intimate. This type of funeral often takes place when someone has planned for it themselves before their death, as it can involve more advance planning.

If you want to arrange a funeral in your local cemetery or crematorium, contact your local council for advice. If you would like to know more about DIY funerals, contact the Natural Death Centre (page 40). You can also read our factsheet **Planning for your funeral** to find out more. In Scotland, see Age Scotland's factsheet **Arranging a funeral**.

**“My brother was quite specific about what kind of funeral he wanted.”**

Alex, 72





## Help with funeral costs

If you're responsible for arranging the funeral and you're on a low income, you may be eligible for a Funeral Expenses Payment to cover various costs. These payments are made through the Social Fund – a government fund to help people with one-off payments and emergency expenses. If you receive money from the person's estate, you'll usually have to repay the Funeral Expenses Payment from this. A house or personal items left to a surviving spouse or civil partner are not counted as part of the estate.

### Next steps

Go to [www.gov.uk/funeral-payments](http://www.gov.uk/funeral-payments) to find out more about Funeral Expenses Payment.

**There are strict rules about who can get help and how much you will receive.** Before making arrangements with a funeral director, call the DWP Bereavement Service (page 36) or check with the local Jobcentre Plus (page 38) to find out what help you might get.

**To be able to claim the payment** you must be the partner of the person who's died or a close relative or close friend, and you or your partner must receive certain means-tested benefits, such as Pension Credit. The Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) can refuse an application from a close relative or friend if it considers that another close relative could arrange and pay for the funeral.

**You must claim within six months of the funeral**, and the amount you receive may be reduced if the person who's died had a pre-paid funeral plan or life insurance policies.



**If there's no money for a funeral, or if no one is willing to pay for or arrange the funeral**, the council will arrange a public health funeral, although they may seek the costs back from the estate. Contact your local council for further information or in Northern Ireland, contact your local Health and Social Care board.

## Next steps

Contact the DWP Bereavement Service (page 36) to find out if you're eligible. In Northern Ireland contact the Bereavement Service (page 36).



### What will a Funeral Expenses Payment cover?

A Funeral Expenses Payment will cover the costs of a simple, respectful funeral in the UK, including:

- buying a new burial plot and burial fees, or cremation costs
- reasonable costs for one return journey within the UK for the responsible person to arrange or attend the funeral
- money towards transport costs if the body has to be transported 50 miles or more
- up to £700 towards other items such as the coffin, religious costs and flowers.



**To claim a Funeral Expenses Payment**, you need Form SF200, which you can get from your local Jobcentre Plus or **GOV.UK** (page 38). You can also call the DWP Bereavement Service to make a claim (page 36). In Northern Ireland, contact the Bereavement Service (page 36).

**If you don't qualify for a Funeral Expenses Payment**, or it doesn't cover the full funeral costs, you may be able to get a Budgeting Loan from the Social Fund. These are interest-free loans of between £100 and £812 that you repay out of your benefits. To claim you need Form SF500, available from your local Jobcentre Plus or GOV.UK. If you receive Universal Credit, you can't apply for a Budgeting Loan, but you can apply for a Budgeting Advance instead. Contact your local Jobcentre Plus for more information about this.



In Northern Ireland, Budgeting Loans have been replaced by the Discretionary Support Service. Contact Age NI for more information (page 35).

**“I didn't have the money to pay for the funeral. But the money we got really helped. I just paid it back when the estate was sorted.”**

Simon, 70



## Next steps



See our factsheet **Social Fund, Advances of Benefit and Local Welfare Provision** to find out more.

# Dealing with the estate



**Probate (known as confirmation in Scotland) is the legal process of distributing the estate – money, property and possessions – of a person who’s died.**

## Sorting out the will

**First you will need to find out whether the person made a valid will.** A will explains what should happen to the person’s estate. A bank, solicitor, the Probate Service, a trusted friend or relative or a will safe facility may hold it. The government website can help you find out if the person had a will. Go to [www.gov.uk/search-will-probate](http://www.gov.uk/search-will-probate) to find out more.

**If there is a will,** the person who died should usually have appointed executors (in Scotland, these are called executors nominate) to deal with the estate. If no executors were appointed, or there is no will, the court appoints an administrator (or executor dative in Scotland).

**If there is no will,** the person is said to have died ‘intestate’ and there are different rules (known as the rules of intestacy). In general, the spouse or civil partner automatically inherits all their personal possessions and the first £250,000 of their estate. However, the rules of intestacy are complex, and you should take advice if you’re dealing with the estate. See our factsheet **Dealing with an estate** to find out more.



In Scotland, different rules apply for intestacy. Contact the local Sheriff Court office (page 41) or Age Scotland (page 35) for more information and a copy of the Scottish government booklet **What to do after a death in Scotland**. In Northern Ireland, contact Age NI (page 35).



**If you are named as an executor in the will**, or if the person died intestate and you think you're entitled to deal with the estate, you need to apply to the local Probate Registry (the Probate Office in Northern Ireland or the local Sheriff Court in Scotland) for a grant of representation (or confirmation in Scotland). You can do this in person or through a solicitor. Call the Probate and Inheritance Tax Helpline for more information (page 40).

Sometimes there's no need to apply for a grant of representation, for example if the value of the estate is very small – usually less than £5,000 in England and Wales or less than £10,000 in Northern Ireland. In Scotland, confirmation may not be required for estates valued at less than £36,000. In this case you need to write to the bank, building society or the organisation that is holding the money. They may insist on seeing documentation such as a death certificate and evidence of your relationship. In Scotland, you need the authority of the Sheriff Court to do this (page 41).

The Probate and Inheritance Tax helpline gives general information and advice on matters relating to probate and can also help you get the forms you need to complete (page 40). You can also consult a solicitor but they will charge for any advice given or work done on behalf of the executor.

## Next steps



See our information guide **How to be an executor**. For legal advice you can find a solicitor through the Law Society in your nation (page 39).

**Gladys and Henry had been married for 52 years when Henry died. Their solicitor said it would take time for probate to be granted.**

**Gladys contacted her local Age UK for advice about financial help after Henry's death.**

'I was so shocked and upset when Henry died, it didn't even occur to me to think about how I would manage for money. Henry always looked after that sort of thing. I realised I would only have my pension to run the house and pay all the bills until the will had been sorted out. My neighbour suggested going to my local Age UK in case there was any help available.'





‘I saw a nice young woman there who explained that I could get 25% off the Council Tax straight away, as I now live alone, and she helped me to claim Pension Credit and Council Tax Support too.

‘Once the probate has been given, Henry’s savings and investment bonds will be passed on to me. This might mean that I get less money in benefits, but for now I’m very relieved and can concentrate on getting other things sorted out.’

# Inheritance Tax

Inheritance Tax (IHT) may have to be paid on the estate if its value is over a certain amount. The current tax-free allowance is £325,000. After that, tax is usually payable at 40%.

There's an additional allowance known as the 'residence nil-rate band', which applies in circumstances when the home is left to children or grandchildren. Where this allowance applies, the tax-free allowance increases to £475,000.

There's no IHT to pay on estates left to a spouse or civil partner. If one partner dies and has not used their tax-free allowance, then this can be passed on to the surviving partner, giving them a higher threshold of up to £950,000 before IHT will apply.

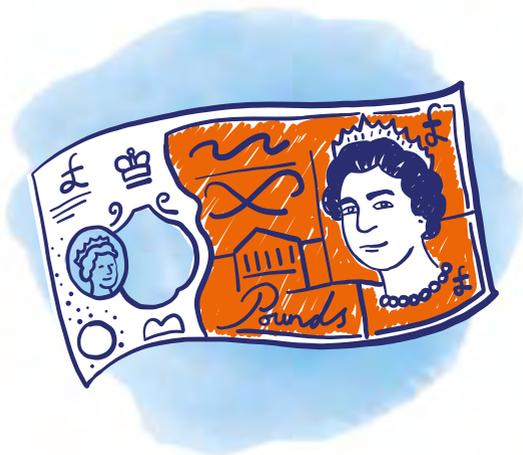
Some gifts made when a person was alive may be subject to IHT. Whether the gifts are liable for IHT will depend on their value, purpose and when they were given. This is a very complex area, so you should seek specialist advice.

In most cases, when there is IHT to be paid it has to be settled before probate is granted. You usually have to pay IHT within six months of the death. On some assets, such as a house that you decide to keep, you may be able to pay IHT in instalments over 10 years but interest will be charged on the amount due.

## Next steps



For more information about Inheritance Tax, see our factsheet **Dealing with an estate**. In Scotland, see the Age Scotland factsheet **Sorting out an estate when someone has died**. For further advice, contact the Probate and Inheritance Tax Helpline (page 40).



## Tax changes

You may find that your tax allowances change after your spouse or civil partner dies, or you may need to pay a different amount of income tax.

- If you were getting Married Couple's Allowance, you'll receive it for the rest of the tax year (up to 5 April) but not the year after. You can contact HMRC (page 38) to find out about transferring the allowance.
- If your spouse or civil partner was receiving Blind Person's Allowance, you can ask HMRC to transfer what's left to you for that tax year.
- If you get extra income after your spouse or civil partner has died, such as bereavement benefits, a pension or annuity, your tax situation might change. It's important to make sure that HMRC (page 38) are aware of any changes so that the tax you pay is correct.

If you're over 60 and on a low income, you can obtain free independent help and advice from Tax Help for Older People (page 41).

# Financial help after a bereavement



If your spouse or civil partner dies, you may be entitled to benefits based on their National Insurance (NI) contributions. The type of benefit depends on your age.

## Things that could help with costs

### State Pension

The rules around inheriting a State Pension are complex and depend on when your deceased partner was born and when you reached State Pension age. These rules do not apply if you remarry or form a new civil partnership before you reach State Pension age. In general, the following rules apply:

- If you're a widow, widower or surviving civil partner and you reached State Pension age before 6 April 2016, you may be able to increase your own State Pension based on your deceased partner's NI contributions. You may also be entitled to some of their additional State Pension and Graduated Retirement Benefit.
- If you're a widow, widower or surviving civil partner and you reached State Pension age after 6 April 2016, you may be able to inherit part of your partner's additional State Pension.

## Next steps



Call Age UK Advice (page 35) or see our factsheet **State Pension** for more information. Contact the DWP Bereavement Service (page 36) for more information and a review of your State Pension entitlement. In Wales, contact Age Cymru advice.

## Bereavement Support Payment

You may be entitled to a lump sum bereavement payment of up to £3,500 and 18 monthly payments of up to £350.

### You'll be eligible if:

- your spouse or civil partner paid enough NI contributions
- you were under State Pension age when they died
- you were not divorced before they died
- you were living in the UK, or a country that pays bereavement benefits, when they died
- you are not living with someone else as spouse or civil partner.

## Benevolent funds and charities

Help is sometimes available from benevolent funds linked to a spouse's, civil partner's or your own past employment. A local advice agency or Turn2us could also help (page 42).

## War pensions

If your late spouse or civil partner served in the armed forces you may be entitled to help. Contact Veterans UK for more information (page 42).

## Next steps



Contact the DWP Bereavement Service (page 36) to check eligibility or to claim for Bereavement Support Payment. In Northern Ireland, contact the Bereavement Service (page 36).



## Means-tested benefits

Many people have money worries after someone dies, so it's important to check whether you're entitled to any of the benefits listed below.

- **Pension Credit** – there are two parts to Pension Credit: Guarantee Credit and Savings Credit. Guarantee Credit tops up low income to a guaranteed minimum level. Savings Credit is extra money if your income is higher than the basic State Pension. It is only available for people who reached State Pension age before 6 April 2016. You can check whether you might be eligible for Pension Credit using the online Pension Credit Calculator on the GOV.UK website.
- **Housing Benefit** – helps to pay rent.
- **Council Tax Support** – gives you money off Council Tax. This is sometimes called Council Tax Reduction. In Northern Ireland, you may be eligible for Rate Rebate.

**“I was really surprised at how much more I could be claiming. I’m glad I had that benefits check.”**

Alan, 68



- **Attendance Allowance or Personal Independence Payment** – if you need help due to an illness or disability.
- **NHS low-income scheme** – help with health costs.
- **Universal Credit** – a means-tested benefit for people under State Pension age, which is being rolled out nationally.
- **Social Fund grants or loans or help from local welfare schemes**, the Scottish Welfare Fund, the Discretionary Assistance Fund in Wales or the Discretionary Support Service in Northern Ireland.

## Next steps

See our information guide **More money in your pocket** for more information about these benefits. In Wales, see Age Cymru’s version of this guide and in Northern Ireland, see Age NI’s version. In Scotland, see Age Scotland’s **Benefits Maze**. Contact your local Age UK for a benefits check or use our online benefits calculator at [www.ageuk.org.uk/calculator](http://www.ageuk.org.uk/calculator).

# Emotional support



Many organisations offer support to people after someone has died. Sharing your feelings with others can help, but if you don't want to talk about how you feel, or aren't ready yet, that's fine too. You can always come back to this page later.

If you or someone you know might benefit from support, one of the following organisations may be able to help:

- Cruse Bereavement Care.
- The Compassionate Friends (for help if you've lost a child or grandchild).
- War Widows' Association of Great Britain.
- Winston's Wish (for support if you are caring for a bereaved child or young person).

See pages 36-42 for details of these organisations. There are also many local community and voluntary groups that offer general bereavement support and tailored support for people from different ethnicities and faiths. You could search for these online or ask your doctor about them.

Some funeral plans include bereavement support for the friends and family of the person who has died. If they had a funeral plan, check to see whether this is included.

## Next steps



For more information about dealing with the emotional aspects of a death, see our information guide **Bereavement**.

# Useful organisations

## Age UK

We provide advice and information for people in later life through our Age UK Advice Line, publications and online.

**Age UK Advice: 0800 169 65 65**

Lines are open seven days a week from 8am to 7pm.

**[www.ageuk.org.uk](http://www.ageuk.org.uk)**

Call Age UK Advice to find out whether there is a local Age UK near you, and to order free copies of our information guides and factsheets.

In Wales, contact Age Cymru: **0800 022 3444**

**[www.agecymru.org.uk](http://www.agecymru.org.uk)**

In Northern Ireland, contact Age NI: **0808 808 7575**

**[www.ageni.org](http://www.ageni.org)**

In Scotland, contact Age Scotland: **0800 124 4222**

**[www.agescotland.org.uk](http://www.agescotland.org.uk)**

## **Bereavement Register**

Register the name and address of a deceased person to help stop unsolicited mail.

Tel: **020 7089 6403** or **0800 082 1230** for the 24-hour automated registration service

**[www.thebereavementregister.org.uk](http://www.thebereavementregister.org.uk)**

## **Bereavement Service**

In Northern Ireland, the Bereavement Service will record the date of death and notify each office that paid benefits to the person who died. Also takes claims for Bereavement Support Payments and Funeral Expenses Payments

Tel: **0800 085 2463**

## **Cruse Bereavement Care**

Counselling and advice service for bereaved people that offers information and practical support.

Tel: **0808 808 1677**

**[www.cruse.org.uk](http://www.cruse.org.uk)**

In Scotland, contact Cruse Bereavement Care Scotland

Tel: **0845 600 2227**

**[www.crusescotland.org.uk](http://www.crusescotland.org.uk)**

## **DWP Bereavement Service**

Carries out eligibility checks on surviving relatives to see what benefits they can claim. Also takes claims for Bereavement Support Payments and Funeral Expenses Payments.

Tel: **0800 731 0469**

(Welsh): **0800 731 0453**

Textphone: **0800 731 0464**

(Welsh textphone): **0800 731 0456**

## **Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency (DVLA)**

Government organisation responsible for issuing driving licences. Contact them to return a driving licence.

Tel: **0300 790 6801** (for driving licence enquiries)

**[www.gov.uk/government/organisations/driver-and-vehicle-licensing-agency](http://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/driver-and-vehicle-licensing-agency)**

## **Funeral Planning Authority**

Regulates providers in the UK pre-paid funeral plan industry. Contact them to find out if the person who's died had a funeral plan with one of the main providers.

Tel: **0845 601 9619**

**[www.funeralplanningauthority.com](http://www.funeralplanningauthority.com)**

## **General Register Office (GRO)**

Registers and supplies official information on births, marriages and deaths registered in England and Wales.

Tel: **0300 123 1837**

**[www.gro.gov.uk/gro/content/certificates/login.asp](http://www.gro.gov.uk/gro/content/certificates/login.asp)**

In Northern Ireland, contact General Register Office for Northern Ireland

Tel: **0300 200 7890**

**[www.nidirect.gov.uk/information-and-services/births-deaths-marriages-and-civil-partnerships/death-and-bereavement](http://www.nidirect.gov.uk/information-and-services/births-deaths-marriages-and-civil-partnerships/death-and-bereavement)**

In Scotland, contact National Records of Scotland

Tel: **0131 535 1314**

**[www.nrscotland.gov.uk/registration/registering-a-death](http://www.nrscotland.gov.uk/registration/registering-a-death)**

## **GOV.UK**

Government website that contains information about bereavement benefits and the Tell Us Once service.

**www.gov.uk**

**www.gov.uk/tell-us-once**

## **HM Passport Office**

Government organisation responsible for issuing all UK passports. Contact them to return the passport of the person who died.

Tel: **0300 222 0000**

**www.gov.uk/government/organisations/hm-passport-office**

## **HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC)**

For information about taxes.

Tel: **0300 200 3300**

Textphone: **0300 200 3319**

## **Human Tissue Authority**

Provides information about body donation for medical research and details of medical schools.

Tel: **020 7269 1900**

**www.hta.gov.uk**

## **Jobcentre Plus**

Provides information on services such as benefits, loans, grants and funeral payments.

Tel: **0800 055 6688**

Textphone: **0800 023 4888**

**www.gov.uk/contact-jobcentre-plus**

## **Law Society of England and Wales**

Helps people find a solicitor and produces guides to common legal problems.

Tel: **020 7242 1222**

**[www.lawsociety.org.uk/for-the-public](http://www.lawsociety.org.uk/for-the-public)**

In Northern Ireland, contact Law Society of Northern Ireland

Tel: **028 9023 1614**

**[www.lawsoc-ni.org](http://www.lawsoc-ni.org)**

In Scotland, contact Law Society of Scotland

Tel: **0131 226 7411**

**[www.lawscot.org.uk/for-the-public](http://www.lawscot.org.uk/for-the-public)**

## **National Association of Funeral Directors**

An independent Trade Association with the membership within the funeral profession.

Tel: **0121 711 1343**

**[www.nafd.org.uk](http://www.nafd.org.uk)**

## **National Insurance Contributions Office**

For information about National Insurance contributions.

Tel: **0300 200 3500**

**[www.gov.uk/government/organisations/hm-revenue-customs](http://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/hm-revenue-customs)**

## **National Society of Allied and Independent Funeral Directors (SAIF)**

A trade association whose members are all independent funeral directors.

Tel: **0345 230 6777** or **01279 726 777**

**[saif.org.uk](http://saif.org.uk)**

## Natural Death Centre

Provides information on all types of funeral choices, but especially family-organised, environmentally friendly funerals and natural burial grounds.

Tel: **01962 712 690**

**[www.naturaldeath.org.uk](http://www.naturaldeath.org.uk)**

## NHS Organ Donor Line

Call to check if someone was on the organ donor register.

Tel: **0300 123 23 23**

## Office of Care and Protection

Registers enduring powers of attorney in Northern Ireland.

Tel: **028 9076 3000**

**[www.justice-ni.gov.uk/topics/courts-and-tribunals/office-care-and-protection-patients-section](http://www.justice-ni.gov.uk/topics/courts-and-tribunals/office-care-and-protection-patients-section)**

## Office of the Public Guardian

Registers lasting powers of attorney and helps attorneys carry out their duties.

Tel: **0300 456 0300**

**[www.gov.uk/government/organisations/office-of-the-public-guardian](http://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/office-of-the-public-guardian)**

In Scotland, contact Office of the Public Guardian (Scotland)

Tel: **01324 678 300**

**[www.publicguardian-scotland.gov.uk](http://www.publicguardian-scotland.gov.uk)**

## Probate and Inheritance Tax helpline

Information and advice on probate and inheritance tax.

Tel: **0300 123 1072** (Probate and IHT helpline)

In Northern Ireland, contact Probate Office

Tel: **028 9072 4678** (Belfast)

If the person who died lived in County Fermanagh, Londonderry or Tyrone, applications can either be made in Belfast, or at District Probate Registry, Londonderry

Tel: **028 7126 1832**

## Registers of Scotland

Maintains registers for legal documents in Scotland.

Tel: **0800 169 9391**

Textphone: **0131 528 3836**

**[www.ros.gov.uk](http://www.ros.gov.uk)**

## Samaritans

Confidential, non-judgemental support for people in distress, 24 hours a day.

Tel: **116 123**

**[www.samaritans.org](http://www.samaritans.org)**

## Sheriff Courts (Scotland)

Sheriff Courts give advice on dealing with an estate in Scotland. You can use the following contact details to find your nearest Sheriff Court office.

Tel: **0131 444 3300**

**[www.scotcourts.gov.uk](http://www.scotcourts.gov.uk)**

## Tax Help for Older People

Gives free tax advice to older people on low incomes (up to £20,000 per year).

Tel: **0845 601 3321** or **01308 488066**

**[www.taxvol.org.uk](http://www.taxvol.org.uk)**

## The Compassionate Friends

National self-help organisation. Parents who have been bereaved themselves offer support and care to other bereaved parents, grandparents and their families.

Tel: **0345 123 2304**

Tel: **0288 77 88 016** (Northern Ireland helpline)

**[www.tcf.org.uk](http://www.tcf.org.uk)**

## **Turn2us**

Helps people access the money available to them – through benefits, grants and other help.

Tel: **020 8834 9200**

**[www.turn2us.org.uk](http://www.turn2us.org.uk)**

## **Veterans UK**

Administers the pension and welfare schemes and provides support services to members of the Armed Forces and veterans.

Tel: **0808 191 4218**

**[www.gov.uk/government/organisations/veterans-uk](http://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/veterans-uk)**

## **War Widows' Association of Great Britain**

Gives advice, help and support to all war widows and their dependants.

Tel: **0845 2412 189**

**[www.warwidows.org.uk](http://www.warwidows.org.uk)**

## **Winston's Wish**

Offers support, information and guidance to people caring for a bereaved child or young person.

Tel: **08088 020 021**

**[www.winstonswish.org](http://www.winstonswish.org)**

# Help us be there for someone else

We hope you found this guide helpful. When times are tough, it's so important to get some support. Did you know you could help us reach someone else who needs a little help? Here's how:

1

## Give your views on guides like this

Our Readers' Panel helps make sure the information we produce is right for older people and their families. We'd love you to join. Go to [www.ageuk.org.uk/publications/readers-panel](http://www.ageuk.org.uk/publications/readers-panel).

2

## Donate to us

Every donation we receive helps us be there for someone when they need us. To make a donation, call us on **0800 169 8787** or go to [www.ageuk.org.uk/donate](http://www.ageuk.org.uk/donate).

3

## Volunteer with us

Our volunteers make an incredible difference to people's lives. Get involved by contacting your local Age UK or at [www.ageuk.org.uk/volunteer](http://www.ageuk.org.uk/volunteer).

4

## Campaign with us

We campaign to make life better for older people, and rely on the help of our strong network of campaigners. Add your voice to our latest campaigns at [www.ageuk.org.uk/campaigns](http://www.ageuk.org.uk/campaigns).

5

## Remember us in your will

A gift to Age UK in your will is a very special way of helping older people get expert support in the years to come. Find out more by calling **020 3033 1421** or visit [www.ageuk.org.uk/legacy](http://www.ageuk.org.uk/legacy).

# What should I do now?

You may want to read some of our other relevant guides, such as:

- **Bereavement**
- **Your mind matters**
- **How to be an executor**

You can order any of our guides or factsheets by giving our Advice Line a ring for free on **0800 169 65 65** (8am-7pm, 365 days a year).

Our friendly advisers will also be able to help answer any questions you have about anything you've read.

All of our publications are available in large print and audio formats.

There's plenty of really useful information on our website, too. Visit **[www.ageuk.org.uk/afteradeath](http://www.ageuk.org.uk/afteradeath)** to get started.

If contact details for your local Age UK are not in the below box, call Age UK Advice free on **0800 169 65 65**.



**0800 169 65 65**  
**[www.ageuk.org.uk](http://www.ageuk.org.uk)**



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