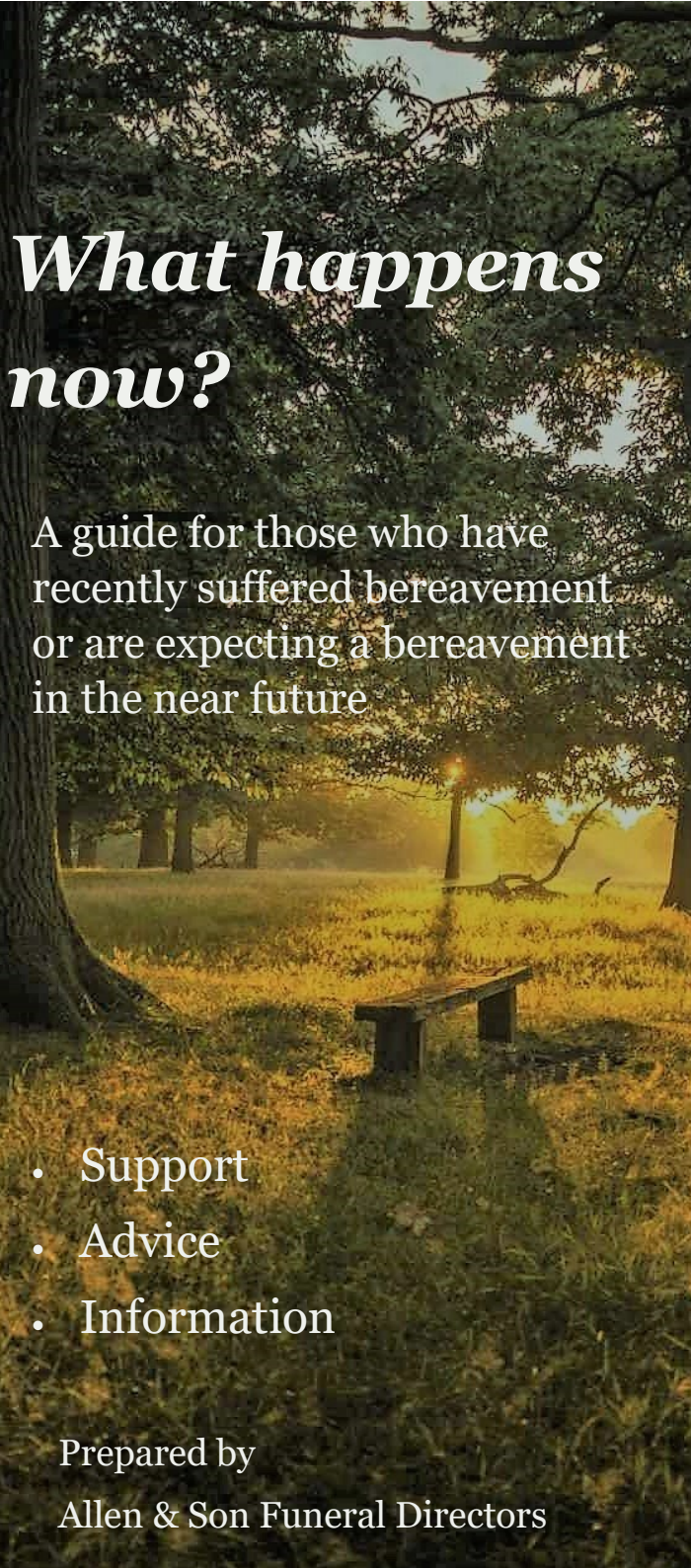




What happens now?

A guide for those who have recently suffered bereavement or are expecting a bereavement in the near future

- Support
- Advice
- Information

Prepared by
Allen & Son Funeral Directors

You are not alone

A time of bereavement is one of the most distressing and sad times of many peoples lives.

Even though a death may be expected, it can still come as a huge shock and can bring with it great stress and worry.

Please remember that ***you are not alone*** in your time of bereavement and there are many people, organisations and agencies ready to help and support you.

This guide has been prepared by Allen & Son Funeral Directors to support those who have suffered a bereavement or are facing one in the near future, and would like some advice.

What happens now...

For many people a death comes as a great shock and many families are confused about what they should do when they are faced with a bereavement. If the death is both **natural and expected** then a doctor should be called to **verify the death**. This is a brief and simple process which confirms the person has died. The doctor (or medical practitioner) who attends at this time will advise you whether the deceased can then be moved to the premises of a funeral director. If the death occurs at home, the first step should be to ring your local surgery or the 'on call'/'out of hours' doctor, who will organise a medical professional to visit. This service is available **24 hours a day**. Once they have attended, they will instruct you what to do next.

If the death occurs in **hospital, residential or care home**, a member of staff will arrange the visit of the doctor on your behalf. They will also advise you of the next steps you need to take. Once the doctor or care staff have instructed you to call a funeral director, you should then phone a local funeral director to arrange for the deceased to be taken into their care at their premises, which is traditionally called a Chapel of Rest. Most funeral directors are available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year to deal with bereavements. **You should not be afraid of contacting a local funeral director at any time of the day or night. They are there to support and help you at any time.**

The Coroner

If for any reason the doctor cannot confirm the cause of death, the **Coroner** will investigate the death. The coroner is supported by the police and is responsible for establishing the cause of death when a doctor is unable to do so. **About one in six deaths** are reported to the coroner in England. This may be because the doctor has not seen the person recently or because the death was deemed to be sudden or unexplained. Occasionally the coroner will order a Post Mortem Examination to ascertain the cause of death. This procedure should not delay the funeral unnecessarily. Whilst the funeral cannot be confirmed until the coroner has issued their certificate, we still advise you to contact a funeral director as soon as possible for advice and support and to begin planning the funeral. Occasionally the results of the post mortem require an **Inquest** to take place. Your funeral director will advise you further on this and it will not necessarily delay the funeral.

Arranging the funeral

Once the deceased has been either removed to the funeral director's Chapel of Rest or taken into the care of the coroner, it is time to meet with the funeral directors to begin the process of planning the funeral. The funeral director will ask you a number of questions before starting to arrange the funeral. Remember, it is the role of the funeral director to serve your family and not lead you in any direction.

You will not be rushed into any decisions and the funeral director will listen to your wishes and advise accordingly.

The funeral director will ask you questions such as whether the funeral will be a burial or a cremation, whether the service may be religious or non-religious and where and when you wish the funeral to take place.

Registering the death

When arranging a funeral you will also need to **register the death** which happens shortly after a bereavement. In order to register the death, the registrar will need either a **Medical Certificate of Cause of Death** from a **Medical Examiner** (who you will probably have spoken with) or authority from the coroner. In either case, they will normally email this directly to the registrar and notify you once this has been done.

You will then need to make an appointment to register the death at the registrars office. Once the death is registered you will receive the legal death certificate and other documents which will allow the funeral to take place.

Financial Concerns

It is not unusual for a bereavement to raise financial worries or complications for families. You may choose to speak to a solicitor, but your funeral director will be able to support and guide you through the payment of funeral expenses. Financial support is available towards the funeral for those who qualify. Your funeral director will be able to tell you more. Some funeral directors also offer simpler and more cost effective funeral arrangements for those families who are working to a tight budget. **Once again, do not be afraid to contact us for free, no obligation help and advice.**

Thoughts and feelings at a time of bereavement

However you react to a bereavement will be very individual and personal. There are no 'rights and wrongs', everyone will experience their own unique feelings and emotions at different times. These are some of the things often said or thought, when someone dies.... They may help you feel that you are not alone:

I can't believe it ...

Why did it have to happen?

I go over it again and again in my mind ...

If only? What if?

They said I'd be over it by now ...

Life has no meaning any more ...

Hopefully you will realise that you are not alone and that many other people feel the same way as you.

Remember, there are many people who are ready and able to help and support you.

Allen & Son offer a **free advice and support service**, for families who think they may need to arrange a funeral in the near future. We are always able to chat with you either on the phone or in person, to give advice, support and guidance on all aspects of arranging a funeral. Please feel free to call Diane & James on the number below at any time.

Useful contact details

Local Registrars Offices

Gloucestershire — 01452 425060

www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/births-marriages-deaths-and-civil-partnerships/register-a-death/

Warwickshire — 0300 555 0255

www.warwickshire.gov.uk/deathregistration

Oxfordshire — 0345 241 2489

www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/registration

Worcestershire — 01905 768181

www.worcestershire.gov.uk/death-registration-services

Department of Work & Pensions — 0800 7310469

Cruse Bereavement Support — 0800 808 1677

Citizens Advice — 0808 223 1133

Samaritans Free National Number — 116 123

National Bereavement Service — 0800 0246121

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