



ALTERNATIVE FUNERAL IDEAS

As more people move away from traditional funerals, unconventional send-offs are becoming a popular way of making funerals more personal and unique. Here are some ideas for inspiration.



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Colourful Funerals

Colourful funerals encourage guests to opt against wearing black and instead, choose vibrant colours to reflect and celebrate the life of the deceased.



You can ask guests to wear colours of their choice or simply stick to one colour which may have been your loved one's favourite.



You could give attendees the option of wearing vibrant colours or dressing in traditional funeral colours, should they feel more comfortable doing so.



Colourful coffins are a relatively new trend. There is an increasingly wide range available for you to choose from.

Alternative Transportation

If you wish to make your loved one's final journey even more personal, choosing an alternative mode of transportation which celebrates their life can be a fitting tribute.



Burial At Home

Home burials are not for everyone, but they're an option to those who own their freehold and follow Government guidelines.

While there aren't many restrictions with home burials, it does need to be considered carefully first.

It's worth thinking about how long the property is going to stay in the family. The burial must be registered on the deeds, and can be off-putting to potential buyers, reducing the property's value.

There are also other considerations such as digging the grave safely.

For some good guidance to having a home burial [visit this site.](#)



Burial At Sea

Burial at sea is an option available to everyone, whether your loved one served in the navy or they were simply a boating enthusiast.



If your loved one expressed a wish to be buried at sea, there are three designated areas in the UK where this is currently permitted:

Newhaven, East Sussex

The Needles Spoil Ground, Isle of Wight

Tynemouth, Northumberland

However, burials at sea have very strict regulations and will require a license for the burial from the [Marine Management Organisation](#) (MMO).

When making arrangements for the deceased's burial, no embalming is allowed as this preservative could cause water pollution.

Instead, a cotton sheet or biodegradable body bag may be used.

When you receive your licence, you will be required to give details of the coffin build and the MMO has the right to inspect the coffin before the ceremony takes place.

Personalised Coffins & Urns



Instead of a wooden coffin or traditional urn, there are so many options to really create something that's truly personalised.

It could be something that represents their career and/or interests, it could be personalised with photos, sayings or even have a chalkboard on there so people can write their own messages.

Below are some examples of what can be done - taken from [Crazy Coffins](#):

COFFINS



URNS



Themed Ceremonies

Pick a theme that represents the life and passions of the departed.

It is a beautiful approach to honour someone's life a bit out of the ordinary.

As there are no rules for setting a funeral, don't think that you have to do the more traditional rituals which people usually perform!



Open Mic Session

Our life is full of memories, and we live on these. An “open mic” session will allow the family and friends of the deceased to cherish the memories.

During this session, the unknown or little known part of the departed person will come to light. These can be the nuggets of generosity or little laugh out loud moments.



Tribute Video

Create a video with a combination of short clips, photos, and special little moments of that person.

You could also make a slideshow with a few pictures and play on a loop in the background during the funeral.

It will really move the family members as well as the guests.



Games

In the funeral, you may mingle with unfamiliar relatives or family friends, and this can be awkward and uncomfortable. Icebreaker questions are a simple and impactful way to kick off memory sharing and storytelling at any funeral.

Let's assume you are planning a funeral for your Grandma. Ask simple questions like

*“Which dish reminds you of grandma?” or
“What’s the funniest memory of you with grandma?”*

With this, you will provide a way for people to swap stories and share new memories leading to laughs, love and healing.



Flowers, Birds & Balloons



Traditional funeral flowers and floral tributes are usually white and simple but opting for brighter flowers or more unusual displays can help celebrate the life of a loved one in a unique way.

Releasing birds like the doves have become a popular way to end a funeral or life celebration.

It is a symbolic and tactile acts that helps family members in the grieving process by the simple act of “letting go”.

Bird release will surely add a sense of hope and beauty to the funeral.



There is also the option of giving family and friends a bright coloured balloon each and thinking of a happy memory, before releasing them together and watching them float away.

But ensure that any balloons you use are eco-friendly ones.

Memory Tree

A memory tree is a beautiful living reminder of a person who passed away.

Ask the funeral guests to write down their favourite memory of the loved one.

Put the message on a beautifully decorated tree that the family can take home with them.



Promote Greenery



A tree always represents life. In many traditions and cultures, planting a tree is a form of symbolising significant occasions, including birth, marriage and death.

You can do it in two ways. Package the seeds and give the packet to the guests and ask them to plant the memorial tree or flower.

Another way is to gather your attendees for joint planting in a special place. You can plant in a park where the deceased went regularly, or in the backyard of his/her house.



Colouring Station

When a loved one dies, we can express our feelings. But what about the children? We never know what is going on in their minds. Set up a small station with crayons, watercolour, coloured pencils and papers. Let them draw pictures in honour of the deceased.

It will help them to stay away from the mourning atmosphere and express their grief with colours. And you never know, some adults may join too!



14 Things You Can Do With The Ashes

1 CREATE SOME JEWELLERY



Have the ashes made into jewellery such as beads and pendants, or have the remains made into a stone that you can wear as earrings, a ring, necklace, or bracelet.

2 CREMATION PORTRAIT



Have an artist mix the ashes with paint to create a portrait. When you look at the portrait, you'll know that part of them is in the artwork.

3 CREATE A FIREWORK



You can use fireworks as part of a memorial celebration. They are a great way to send a loved one off in style. There are several companies that can incorporate the ashes of a loved one into fireworks.

4 CREATE A CORAL REEF



Create a permanent living legacy under the sea. You can arrange for your loved one's ashes to be placed in "[Solace Stones](#)". These are then incorporated into an artificial reef.

5 PLANT A TREE OVER A BIODEGRADABLE URN



Woodland burials and green funerals are increasing in popularity. If you like this idea, you can transform your loved one's ashes into a tree.

You plant the ashes along with a seed inside a biodegradable urn, and the tree grows with the help of the cremated remains.

6 PUT THEM INTO VINYL RECORDS



Create a bespoke vinyl record that you can cherish for many years to come. You can record a personal message, your own soundtrack, your last will and testament, or simply the sound of silence.

7 HAVE A MEMORIAL CUDDLY TOY MADE



If you'd like to keep your loved one close to you, you might want to place a small amount of their ashes into a cuddly toy or memorial bear. The ashes are typically concealed inside the toy in a container.

This type of memorial is very fitting for families who have lost a child.

8 HAVE THEM IN A TATTOO



There are tattoo studios in the UK who will use body ink that contains some of your loved one's ashes. The ashes are mixed with ink to create a unique memorial tattoo.

9 WAVE THEM GOODBYE IN A VIKING BOAT



Place your loved one's ashes inside and let it sail away. You can then set it aflame for a spectacular Viking-style send-off.

10 HONOUR THEIR MEMORY WITH 3D TECHNOLOGY



Your choice of ash container is no longer limited to an urn or box. Thanks to 3D technology you can now have a custom urn made in any shape you want.

11 HAVE A CREMATION SCULPTURE DESIGNED



By using a small portion of the cremated remains and incorporating them into an original work of art you have a beautiful memorial that permanently contains a part of your loved one. The most popular sculptures are made by turning ashes to glass.

12 TURN THEM INTO STONES



If you feel uncomfortable about keeping ashes around, you can have them turned into stones. Once their ashes have been made into stones, you can hold them in your hands and feel their energy.

13 GET A CREMATION DIAMOND



Did you know you can create a beautiful diamond from your loved one's ashes? This is quite an impressive memorial idea. Once the diamond has been created, it can be set in a range of precious metal keepsakes or jewellery.

14 ADD AS SAND IN AN HOURGLASS



Why not consider a poignant reminder to always live your life to the full and make the most of every moment? Display your loved one's ashes in an eye-catching hourglass that sits on the mantel.

DIY Funeral

For such a long time, it has been believed that a professional funeral director needs to play a lead role in organising a funeral. It is the vast majority of people's first call. But this view is changing and an increasing number of families are choosing to have DIY funerals.

In the UK, there is no legal requirement to use a funeral director. So if you want a less formal celebration, want full involvement and control of the whole process, and have the support and help you need, arranging a DIY funeral is a very viable option.

There will be lots of things to organise, so many of them are straightforward. With the right preparation and planning, anyone who wants to organise a funeral independently can do so.



Things that you would need to consider:

Care and transportation of the deceased.

This is probably the biggest challenge for most people. You can always enlist the professionals help eg looking after your loved one's body before the funeral.

Booking a cremation or burial date

Completing the required paperwork and submitting it on time

Booking a Celebrant – if required

Purchasing a coffin, casket or shroud

Arranging all the details of the day

There is a great guide to planning a DIY funeral [here](#).



For help, support and guidance about incorporating any of these alternative ideas into your ceremony, please just get in touch.



ruth@thepembscelebrant.co.uk

07875 410 374

www.thepembscelebrant.co.uk