

How to Plan a Winter Funeral for Your Loved One

Losing someone you love is never easy, and when it happens in winter, the shorter days and unpredictable weather can make everything feel even harder.

We have put together this support guide to help you navigate this difficult time and plan a winter funeral that feels right for you and your family.

Give yourself time

- You need space to process what has happened – turn to family, friends or professionals for emotional support.
- Winter can add extra challenges at a time that is already emotionally demanding, so be patient and kind to yourself.
- Eat well, rest when possible, and don't be afraid to ask for help with practical arrangements.
- Try not to make decisions in a rush and please remember that your funeral director will be on hand to help guide you through options.

Choose the type of funeral service

- Funerals usually take place within two to three weeks of a death.
- Decide whether you prefer a simple, dignified farewell or a traditional funeral service.
- Your loved one may have a pre-paid funeral plan that lays out what they would like to happen.

- Think about what feels right and most fitting for your family.

Plan around winter daylight hours

- Winter funerals are typically held between 9.30am and 3pm.
- Consider booking a morning slot to allow guests to travel safely in daylight.
- A later date may ease pressure for relatives travelling long distances.
- Ask your funeral director about flexible timing options at quieter crematoriums or cemeteries if you need a more suitable date.

Prepare for winter weather

- If possible, choose a warm, accessible indoor location for the service or wake.
- Consider the impact of icy roads, snow or rain on travel arrangements.
- Ask if there will be grit on paths, step-free access and covered areas for waiting.
- Have a contingency date if severe weather is on the horizon as a back-up option.
- Ask about live-streaming the service for frail or distant guests who can't make it.

Select seasonal funeral flowers

- Consider seasonal sprays and wreaths that are sourced locally, eco-friendly and meaningful.
- Choose winter flowers like snowdrops, hellebores, winter heathers, camellias, chrysanthemums and amaryllis.
- Add touches of foliage like holly, ivy, pine, fir, and laurel, and eucalyptus for a calming fragrance.

Wear cosy funeral clothes

- Warm fabrics like wool, cashmere, tweed, or velvet will provide cosy comfort.
- Layer with scarves, hats, gloves, and cardigans for outdoor moments.
- Dark colours like black, navy, charcoal, burgundy, or forest green are natural choices in winter.
- Wear practical footwear to navigate icy paths or wet grass.

Honour in your own way

- Personalise the service with music, readings or symbolic gestures that reflect your loved one's life and values.
- Use candles to create a warm and welcoming space, and flowers, photographs and keepsakes to create a meaningful farewell.
- Take comfort in knowing that with careful planning, professional support and your personal touch, a winter funeral can be warm, dignified and deeply memorable.

We are here to help you through this difficult time. If you would like more information, support and advice for planning a funeral for your loved one, please call our 24-hour Careline on **0800 0744 362** or pop into your local East of England Co-op Funeral Services branch.

Or you can visit:
www.eastofengland.coop/funerals/