



What to do when someone has died

A practical guide, step by step information for what to do when someone dies, from during the first few days including arranging a funeral, to dealing with financial and legal affairs, as well as ExtraCare specific information and bereavement support.

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Verifying and Certifying the Death

There's a lot to take in when someone dies. Here are some practical things that usually need to happen in the first few days. They are explained in more detail on the following pages. They don't always happen in the same order.

- Someone who is present needs to tell the person's nurse or GP.
- A trained healthcare professional needs to verify the death, to confirm that the person has died (known as 'formal verification of death').
- Everyone should respect any wishes the person had about how their body should be cared for.
- Friends and family should call the funeral director, if they are using one. The funeral director will usually come and collect the body.
- A doctor needs to certify the death by completing a 'medical certificate of cause of death' (this is different from a death certificate).
- Friends and family need to take the medical certificate of cause of death to the local registrar to register the death. The registrar will then issue the 'death certificate' and 'certificate for burial or cremation'. These need to be given to the funeral director.
- Look for a Will to see who the named executors are (the people who sort out the person's affairs) and if the person left instructions for their funeral.

This can be a lot to organise at what may be an emotionally very difficult time. You don't have to do everything yourself – ask for support from health and social care professionals, family and friends. If you need support or information, contact the Marie Curie Support Line on **0800 090 2309**.

Verifying and certifying a Death

If someone dies at home

Verifying the death

A doctor, nurse or other trained healthcare professional can **verify the death**. They do this by making certain checks to be sure that the person has died. It's best not to move the body from the home before this has taken place.

If a healthcare professional is already with you, they may be able to verify the death. If not, you will need to call the GP practice. They will make arrangements for someone to visit.

If the person dies in the evening, at night, at the weekend or on a bank holiday, call the GP and you'll be given a number to phone for a doctor.

If a Marie Curie Nurse or other healthcare professional is present at the time of death, they will check the person's care plan to see whether the GP needs to be called or if other arrangements are in place.

Getting a medical certificate

A doctor will need to certify the death. This is usually done by a GP who saw the person recently. They'll complete a **medical certificate of cause of death** if the death was expected and they're sure it was from natural causes.

They'll also give you a **notice to informant**, which will be attached to the medical certificate of cause of death. It tells you how to register a death. Sometimes a GP will verify and certify the death at the same time.

But if the person who verifies the death is unable to certify it, you'll need to get a medical certificate of cause of death from the GP the next day. If the body is with a funeral director, they will see the body there.

The GP might need to report the death to the coroner. This usually happens if the death was sudden or unexpected, if a GP hadn't seen the person during their last illness, or if the death may have been related to their work. Try not to worry if the death is reported to the coroner. The coroner may decide that the cause of death is clear and no further investigation is needed. Or they might investigate why and when the death occurred, potentially doing a post-mortem. If you have concerns, contact the coroner's office to find out what will happen next.

The medical certificate of cause of death is the document that should be taken to the register office in the local council where the death occurred. Most register offices ask that you book an appointment in advance, so it's best to contact them first.

If someone dies at a hospice or hospital

Hospices and hospitals have their own arrangements for verifying and certifying a death. They'll issue the medical certificate of cause of death and give you information about registering the death.

A member of staff will offer you advice about contacting a funeral director, although they may not be able to recommend a company.

What happens after a death is verified and certified?

After the death has been certified the next stage depends on whether you are using a funeral director or handling the arrangements yourself. You may want to check if the person had a financial funeral plan in place (a burial or cremation they've already paid for).

The Funeral Planning Authority has a service to help trace plans if you think the person might have had a plan, but you can't find it.

If you're using a funeral director you can contact them once you're ready.

You don't have to rush. The funeral director will generally come within an hour of being contacted.

You can ask the funeral director to come a bit later if you want a little more time to sit with the body, wait for family or friends to arrive, or simply to collect yourself. If you're using a funeral director and want to keep the body at home for a few hours, discuss this with them and they will advise you.

Some people may find it distressing to see the person's body being moved or watch the preparations beforehand. You may want to ask the funeral director what will be involved as some people might prefer to leave the room.

Registering the death

All deaths need to be registered with the registrar for births, deaths and marriages. This must be done within five days in England. This includes weekends and bank holidays. It may differ if the registrar agrees to extend the period, or if the death has been referred to the coroner.

If a death has been referred to the coroner, you'll need to wait for them to give permission before you can register the death. There's no cost for registering a death but you will need to pay to get copies of the death certificate.

Where to register the death

When you get the medical certificate of cause of death, ask for the address of the local register office. You can also find your local register office online.

In England and Wales, it's best to use the register office closest to where the person died. You can try to use a register office in another area, but the paperwork may take a few days and this could delay funeral arrangements.

Many register offices will only see someone by appointment, so it's best to call in advance to book a time. It usually takes around half an hour to register a death.

If a family member can't register the death, it can be registered by one of the following people:

- Someone who was present at the death
- The person's executor or other legal representative
- An owner or occupier of the part of the building where the death took place if they were aware of the death
- The person arranging the funeral, but not the funeral director.
- The governor, matron or chief officer of a public building where the death occurred
- A person finding, or taking charge of, the body.

If you are in any doubt about who can register a death, you can call the register office.

What you'll need

You must take the medical certificate of cause of death with you to register a death. The GP or hospital doctor will give this to you. You should bring some identification (e.g. a driving licence) as proof of who you are.

You should also try to bring the person's:

- Birth and marriage or civil partnership certificate
- NHS medical card
- Proof of their address, such as a utility bill
- Documents relating to receipt of government pension or allowances
- Driving licence
- Passport

Don't worry if you can't find all these documents – you'll still be able to register the death without them.

The registrar will want to know:

- The person's full name (at the time of their death)
- Other names that the person used (e.g. a birth or married name)
- Their date and place of birth, including the town and county if they were born in the UK, or just the country if they were born abroad
- Their last address
- Their occupation or last occupation if now retired
- The full name of their husband, wife or civil partner, if they've died
- Details of any state pension or other state benefit they were receiving

Forms you'll get from the registrar

The registrar will give you two documents:

- A **Certificate for Burial and Cremation**. This is often known as the green certificate or form. It gives permission for the body to be buried or for an application for cremation to be made, and you should give this to the funeral director.
- A **Certificate of Registration of Death (form BD8)**. This is also called a death certificate. You'll need this to deal with the person's affairs if they were getting a pension or benefits.

Getting copies of the death certificate

You can only hold the funeral or arrange for the cremation to take place after you've received the death certificate. Registering the death itself is free, but you have to pay for death certificates.

You'll usually need one certified copy (not a photocopy) for each insurance, bank or pension company you're dealing with. You may also need to give copies to the executor or administrator who is dealing with the property of the person who's died. The executor of the Will and the registrar should be able to help you work out how many copies you need.

Cost of getting a death certificate

The cost of a certified copy varies across the UK but is usually between £8 and £12. Try to get enough copies when you first register the death because buying more later on is sometimes more expensive.

Checking if there's a Will

One of the first things to do following a death is to check if the person who died made a Will. This is important because they may have left instructions about their funeral arrangements. Dealing with a Will can be difficult, especially when you're grieving your family member or friend. If you need support, you may be able to get help from a solicitor or Citizens Advice.

The main purpose of the Will is to:

- Appoint one or more people (called **executors**) to carry out the instructions in the Will and the other tasks involved with administering the person's estate
- Set out instructions about passing on the **estate** of the person who's died (any property, money and possessions).

If the person who died had a bank account, tell the bank that they have died. The bank will normally allow the executor to immediately pay funeral expenses from the account, providing the account has money in it and the executor can provide a copy of the death certificate and the original funeral invoice.

If there's no Will

Dying without making or leaving a valid Will is called dying **intestate**.

The estate will still need to be sorted out and the person who takes on this task is called the **administrator**. Usually this will be the next of kin.

If there's no Will, a person's estate will be distributed according to rules of intestacy set out in law.

If there are problems with the Will or arrangements

If a person leaves a Will but the instructions in it don't cover the whole estate intestacy laws will apply to the bit that's not covered. This situation is called **partial intestacy**.

Partial intestacy can also apply if the Will appoints executors who have already died or don't wish to take on the role, in this case an administrator needs to take over. You can find more information about the intestacy rules at **GOV.UK**

Planning the funeral

Organising a funeral can be difficult when you're trying to cope with feelings of loss and grief. This section provides information about funeral planning and explains the process, to try to make it less stressful.

See Cruse information later on for help with your feelings at this difficult time.

Getting started

Asking yourself a few questions before you start can help you to plan with confidence and peace of mind.

- Did the person who died tell you what they wanted or leave instructions in their Will?
- Did they want to be buried or cremated? Did they want their ashes in an urn or scattered?

If there are no formal instructions the executor named in the Will or the person who is arranging and paying for the funeral will make the decisions. They must also decide if any wishes expressed by the person who died are practical, affordable and acceptable to family and friends. A Will is legally binding except for the funeral instructions so it's OK not to follow the wishes expressed in the Will if they aren't possible or practical.

Telling friends and family

You can call, write or email friends and family members about the funeral. You can also place an announcement about the death in a newspaper. If you use a funeral director they can do this for you. This is a good way to reach people who weren't in regular contact with the person who died. You can also create a social media page in the person's memory and share it with people they knew.

When you're telling people about the funeral:

- Include the date, time and place of the funeral or memorial event
- Mention any wishes about flowers or donations to charity

Choosing a funeral director

If you decide to use a funeral director, it might help to think about the following:

- Look for a member of a professional association such as the National Association of Funeral Directors or the National Society of Allied and Independent Funeral Directors.
- Ask for a recommendation from friends or a local faith leader.
- If you want an eco-friendly funeral or a woodland burial contact the Association of Green Funeral Directors or the Natural Death Centre.

Before you go ahead

Contact several funeral directors in your area to compare prices and available options. When they give you a quote, a funeral director should separate out their fees from set fees from third parties (cemeteries, crematoriums, churches or doctors) so you can compare costs. They can also give you a written estimate.

You can ask for a price list or cost breakdown to help you decide which items and services to choose. A full breakdown of funeral costs is available later in this section.

If you don't use a funeral director

You don't have to use a funeral director if you don't want to. You can contact your local cemeteries and cremation department to get information about arranging a funeral yourself. This could be either a traditional funeral, or an alternative one such as a natural burial in a woodland. To find out more, contact the cemeteries and crematorium department of your local council or the Natural Death Centre.

Using a funeral director

If you'd like to use a funeral director, it can make your life a bit easier, but it's usually more expensive. There are several different options including:

- The funeral director makes all the arrangements with instruction from you to make sure you get the funeral you and your family want (within the limits of the law and what you can afford).
- The funeral director makes most of the arrangements but you choose songs, music, hymns or readings.
- You arrange the funeral, but the funeral director organises certain items or services such as the coffin or hearse.

Questions to ask a funeral director

- What services do you provide?
- Can we pick from your list of services and just pay for the ones we choose?
- What do your charges include?
- Are any items included in your quote optional or are there alternatives?
- When do we pay the bill?

- Do we have to pay a deposit? Are you comfortable delivering the choices we have discussed?
- Can we buy a coffin or its equivalent from another source?
- Can we provide our own transport?
- Can friends or family members carry the coffin?

Burial

The registrar will give you a 'Certificate for Burial or Cremation' (sometimes called 'the green form') to give to the funeral director. The funeral director can then make arrangements for the burial based on your wishes.

If you're not using a funeral director give the green form to the manager of the place where the person is to be buried.

Here are some tips about organising a burial. A funeral director, if you're using one, can also give information about different options in your area.

- If the person who died wanted to be buried in a church burial ground, the parish priest can help organise this. Some are no longer open for burial because of lack of space.
- To arrange a burial in a council-run cemetery, you need a grave plot. The cemetery manager can advise you (you can find their contact details on the council website). The cost may vary depending on whether the person lived in the area. The person who died might have bought their cemetery grave plot in advance, in which case check for a **Deed of Grant** or **Exclusive Right of Burial** in their paperwork.
- Most cemeteries are non-denominational. This means you can hold most types of service in their grounds.
- You may wish to use a natural burial ground. These include woodland burial sites, nature reserves and meadow burial sites.
- You can also bury your friend or family member on their own land. There are some rules but not as many as you might think. If this is something you want to find out about contact the Natural Death Centre

Cremation

If the person who died is being cremated some paperwork is necessary before going ahead. The funeral director and crematorium manager can advise you if you're not sure which forms you need. The forms used most often include:

- **Application for cremation of the body of a person who has died.** The funeral director will help you fill this in, or you can ask at the crematorium. The crematorium will also usually have its own form requesting instructions for the ashes.
- **Doctors' forms.** A doctor signs the death certificate free of charge. But when a person is cremated the doctor who certified the death and another doctor not involved in looking after the person who died have to fill in a form. You have to pay for these forms. If you're using a funeral director the cost will be part of their disbursements (these are the payments they make to others on your behalf).

Total costs

Funeral costs vary depending on where you live in the UK.

The amounts below are approximate, average costs across the UK. They are based on a 2018 report from Sun Life (an insurance and funeral plan company) and actual costs may vary.

Basic cremation £3,600

Basic burial £4,800

Send-off £2,100

Breakdown of some cremation and burial costs

Funeral director fees £2,600

Doctor's fees £164 (no fee in Scotland)

Faith leader or celebrant fees £160

Burial fees £2,200

Cremation fees £850

Headstone £900

Funeral

Financial support from the government

If you're organising a funeral and you're on benefits you may be entitled to claim a Funeral Expenses Payment from the government towards the funeral costs. You must apply within six months of the funeral.

To qualify, you must be the partner of the person who died, or a close family member or friend. You might not qualify for a Funeral Expenses Payment if the person who died has a close family member such as a sibling or parent, who is in work.

It pays basics such as the burial or cremation and doctors' fees and gives you a sum of money towards other expenses (such as the coffin and funeral director's fees).

If you live in England, Scotland or Wales, you can claim by calling the Bereavement Service helpline on **0800 731 0469**.

Funeral Expenses Payments are different to Bereavement Support Payments which can also be used to help with funeral costs.

Including vulnerable people

You may want to think about how to include people who could find the day particularly difficult or confusing.

Including children

Just as adults do, children like to know what's going on and to feel included. Here are some tips on involving them:

- Explain that a funeral is a chance to say goodbye and remember the person.
- Say what's likely to happen and who will be with them on the day.

- Ask if they might like to make something such as a card or a drawing, or choose flowers to put on top of the coffin.
- Give them plenty of time to choose whether they want to come and try not to feel upset if they don't want to.
- Arrange to have a familiar person with them during the ceremony in case they become upset and want to leave the funeral.

Including someone with dementia, a learning difficulty or mental health problems

The death of a family member or friend can be especially hard for someone with dementia, learning disabilities or a mental health problem. They may process the bereavement quite differently or struggle to understand that someone they care about has died.

Dementia

It may be important to someone with dementia to come to the funeral, especially if the person who died was someone close, such as their partner or sibling.

If someone has dementia, they may forget that you have told them about the death and become shocked, upset or frightened. This might also mean that you have to repeat yourself.

You could ask if a carer or familiar family member can sit with them during the service and explain what's happening.

Sometimes singing familiar hymns or hearing favourite songs can be a comfort. A picture of the person who's died on the front of the order of service might help them focus on what the service is about.

Terminology - Words you may hear

Will

This is a legally binding document that explains what the person who died wanted done with their assets and possessions. It should also include details of who should sort out their affairs after death. These people are called the executors.

Probate

The legal permission granted by the Probate Registry to deal with someone's estate after they die. 'Getting probate' is the process of getting someone's papers together and applying for probate. This is usually done by a lawyer and or the executors (or administrators, if there's no Will).

Inheritance

This is when someone receives money, property or another personal possession from the person who has died. The person who inherits is called a beneficiary. They might inherit something because they're mentioned in the Will (in this case it's also called a legacy). If the person who died didn't make a Will the beneficiary might inherit something if they're the next closest relative.

Intestacy

This is when someone dies without making a valid Will – it's also called 'dying intestate'. The estate will still need to be sorted out and the person who takes on this task is called the administrator. Usually this will be the next of kin.

Deceased (the)

This is how the person who has died may be described in official documents.

Telling organisations about a death

It can help to make a list of the people and organisations you may need to tell about the person's death. Here are a few examples:

- Employers and colleagues
- Government departments
- The person's GP
- Bank, credit card and mortgage companies – to close accounts or change the details
- Insurance companies – change name on home insurance to surviving partner / spouse
- Utility companies such as gas, water, electricity and telephone
- The landlord, if they had one
- Royal Mail
- TV and internet companies
- Church, clubs, trade unions or any other organisation the person belonged to
- The person's accountant and solicitor, and any executors appointed in the Will (see below).

This might seem overwhelming at first. It might be something that another family member or friend can help with. You may want to close down the person's social media accounts or look at options to keep them but make them inactive.

Executors- Dealing with Someone's Estate

Telling people or organisations that someone has died is different from being able to deal with their estate and probate. Dealing with the estate is done by the executors, who are responsible for sorting out what was owned and owed.

Government departments

Tell Us Once service

Tell Us Once is a service offered by most but not all local councils in England. It allows you to report a death to most government organisations in one go. The registrar can tell you if it's available in your area. Organisations that Tell Us Once will contact include:

- Local councils
 - Housing benefit office and council housing
 - Council tax payments and benefits office
 - Libraries
 - Blue Badge
 - Adult social care
- HM Passport Office
 - Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency
 - Department for Work and Pensions
 - Jobcentre Plus
 - Ministry of Defence
 - War Pensions Scheme
 - HM Revenue & Customs (HMRC).

If your local register office offers the Tell Us Once service, you'll usually be told when you register the death. Ask them if it's not mentioned. They'll give you a unique reference number that will allow you to access the service online. Alternatively, you can contact them over the phone or in person. Call the Department for Work and Pensions on **0800 085 7308** to use the phone service.

You'll need to register the death before using the Tell Us Once service, unless there's an inquest. If this happens, the coroner may give you an interim death certificate. However, not all local councils will allow this.

You can see which local register offices provide the Tell Us Once service using the **GOV.UK** search tool

What you'll need when using the Tell Us Once service

As well as your unique reference number, you'll need to have the following information to hand about the person who died:

- National Insurance number
- Date and place of birth
- Date of marriage or civil partnership
- Driving licence number and vehicle registration number

You'll also need:

- Details of any benefits they were getting, including the State Pension and armed forces pension
- Details of any local council services they were getting e.g. Blue Badge
- Name and address of their next of kin
- Name and address of their surviving husband, wife or civil partner
- Name, address and contact details of the person or company dealing with the estate – the executor or administrator

If you can't find all the documents, you can still use the Tell Us Once service but not all organisations will be informed. You'll have to make contact with them individually when you find the information.

Redirecting post

For a fee, you can get the Post Office to redirect the mail of the person who's died. Ask at the Post Office for a form called 'Redirecting mail in special circumstances'. You'll need a death certificate or Power of Attorney document and some proof of your own identity.

Your role as executor or administrator is to apply for **probate**. If the person left a Will, you'll get a 'grant of probate'. If they didn't, you'll get 'letters of administration'. These are the official documents that allow you as executor to distribute the person's estate.

The person who died may have appointed you as sole executor or administrator, or they may have appointed several people.

If you can't or don't want to be the executor, you can apply for 'renunciation' (to give it up) or for someone to act as your representative. There is information about this at **GOV.UK** or you can ask a solicitor to sort it out for you.

Once you've been granted probate or letters of administration, you're allowed to pay the debts of the estate – these are normally paid from the estate. You should also find all the people, charities and other organisations that are to inherit parts of the estate (called the beneficiaries) and distribute their inheritances to them.

Getting Started

Here are some suggestions to make your job easier:

- Read the online guide *what to do when someone dies: step by step* on the **GOV.UK** website which outlines what to do and where to get help. It also lists who needs to be told about the death. There are some regional differences, which it tells you about.
- When you go to the registry office to register the death, order multiple copies of the death certificate (the staff can advise you how many you'll need). You'll need to tell many

organisations about the death. Most will need to see an original death certificate. It speeds up the process if you can send out several certificates at the same time. Multiple copies can be provided later but it's cheaper to order them when the death is first registered.

- If the person who died had a bank account and there is enough money in the account, the bank will usually allow funeral expenses and inheritance tax to be paid from it. Talk to the bank about how to arrange this.
- You can also open an executor's bank account. You can put money from the person's estate (e.g. from the sale of their property) in this account ready to distribute it to beneficiaries.

You need to get the legal right to deal with someone's property before you can distribute money to the beneficiaries (people who inherit). It's called getting a 'grant of probate'. If the person did not leave a Will, you'll get 'letters of administration'. You apply in the same way for both.

If the person who died lived in England or Wales, you can apply online at **GOV.UK**.

Dealing with tax matters

The person may have died part-way through a tax year (which runs from 6 April to the following 5 April). They may owe some Income Tax or be due a refund.

Your entitlement to benefits and other support

Bereavement benefits

You may qualify for benefits after someone dies. These include:

- Bereavement Support Payment
- Child Benefit if a child or parent has died
- Funeral Expenses Payments or Assistance
- Guardian's Allowance (if you're bringing up a child whose parents have died)
- War Widow/er Pension
- Widowed Parent's Allowance

GOV.UK has information about these, including how to qualify, and how to apply. If you used the Tell Us Once Service when you registered the death, they will check if you're eligible for benefits. You can also call the Bereavement Service helpline on 0345 606 0265.

Council Tax, pensions and insurance

If you're now living alone, tell your local council. In England, Scotland and Wales, you may qualify for 25% off your Council Tax bill.

If your husband, wife or civil partner was getting the State Pension when they died, you may be able to use their National Insurance contributions to get extra State Pension. In England, Scotland and Wales, contact the Pension Service to find out more.

If the person who died had a private or occupational pension, tell the pension provider. You may be entitled to some money. If the person who died had life insurance, contact their provider to find out what to do next.

Bereavement Supporter project

From 2017 to 2021, Cruse Bereavement Care and ExtraCare are working in partnership, funded by the National Lottery Community Fund, to improve bereavement support for residents.

The Bereavement Supporter Project aims to:

Provide information, and increase awareness about how grief may be experienced and support services that are available;

Recruit, train, and deploy ExtraCare residents to be Bereavement Supporters who will act as first contact listening support to bereaved people in their communities; and

- Improve signposting and access to specialist bereavement and mental health support services.

Throughout the project roll out, each ExtraCare village will have resident 'Bereavement Supporter' volunteers recruited. These volunteers will receive training from Cruse and will be able to offer confidential listening support to residents following a bereavement. Residents can 'self-refer' for support.

Cruse Bereavement Care

Cruse Bereavement Care is the leading national charity for bereaved people. We offer support, advice and information to children, young people and adults when someone die, and work to enhance society's care of bereaved people.

Cruse offers face-to-face, group, telephone, email and website support. We have a Freephone national helpline and local services throughout England, Wales and Northern Ireland. Our website Hope Again provides support for young people.

Our services are provided by trained volunteers and are confidential and free.

Cruse provides training and consultancy for external organisations and for those who may encounter bereaved people in the course of their work.

www.cruse.org.uk

National Helpline freephone on 0808 808 1677

Better lives for older people

www.extracare.org.uk

Surrendering a Lease

'Surrender' is the process of giving ExtraCare formal notice to terminate the lease. You may be doing this yourself (as a resident) or on the behalf of someone else (in the event of someone's death).

The notice to surrender a person's lease must be given in writing (email or letter). If a resident is surrendering their lease, they have to give 3 months' notice to leave. If a resident's representative is giving notice (in the event of death), they must give 28 days' notice. Please be aware that if you have to apply for Grant of Probate through the courts, it is highly unlikely that you will be able to surrender the lease within the 28 days. It usually takes a number of weeks to obtain Grant of Probate. The notice period will begin when ExtraCare receives your written notice to leave the village or scheme. **Please ensure that written notice is given to your local Sales Consultant and not to another member of staff – failure to follow this could result in the surrender process being delayed.**

On receiving your letter of surrender, we will notify our accounts department and the weekly charges for the property will stop and the account will go into arrears (usually if a resident has passed away). The arrears will be settled on the completion of the sale of the property back to ExtraCare (surrender) and the outstanding amount will be taken from the capital. If you still reside in the property during the notice period (i.e. you are a resident), the weekly charges will continue as normal and will stop once the lease has surrendered back to ExtraCare. **Please note that the property owner is responsible for the weekly charges during the surrender period.**

People that have the authority to hand in notice of a property are the following:

- The named person on the lease
- A Power of Attorney
- Next of Kin (they would need to be the Executor or Personal representative)

Council Tax is excluded from the weekly charges a resident pays to ExtraCare. Therefore you must contact the local authority about any changes. You will be responsible for the Council Tax until the property is legally no longer your responsibility (i.e. surrendered the lease back to ExtraCare).

Any Housing Benefit that was being claimed by a resident will no longer be valid if the resident has passed away. Please be sure to contact the relevant authorities to notify them of any changes. Please ask reception to book an appointment to see our Welfare

Benefits Advisor if you are not sure what the change in circumstances might mean for you.

Grant of Probate

If you are contacting us because a family member or someone close to you has passed away and they currently reside in our village or scheme, then it's likely that you will need to apply for Grant of Probate through the courts.

When a person passes away, most have a Will in place to deal with their assets. This will name an Executor(s) to deal with the distribution of the deceased's assets. However, these assets cannot be distributed to people within the Will without an official Grant of Probate being granted by the court. One asset will be the ExtraCare property.

The Executor will need to apply to the court to ask them to grant probate so that they can then deal with the assets (banks will need to see Grant of Probate before they will give access to the deceased's accounts). Your chosen solicitor will need to see the Probate so that ExtraCare are able to buy the property back from the Executors of the Will. The weekly/monthly charges will continue until Grant of Probate has been obtained and your solicitor is able to surrender the lease, so we would advise that you are proactive with obtaining Grant of Probate.

Please advise us which solicitor you are intending to use as soon as possible.

It is not compulsory to use a solicitor to surrender the lease, however we would highly recommend appointing one.

Useful Services

Citizens Advice: 'what to do after a death' is a guide through the formalities of what to do once a person has passed away - www.citizensadvice.org.uk.

'Tell Us Once': a service run by most local authorities. It allows you to report a death to several government departments, agencies and the local authority in one contact - www.gov.uk/tell-us-once.

Access to the property

Please be advised that maintenance will require access to the apartment to carry out checks and conduct cyclical maintenance. We have to carry out quarterly checks on fire alarms/sensors as part of the MOT on apartments. We also have to do a weekly flush on the water by running taps and showers. This is for health and safety, and is

essential to prevent legionella. We also carry out two maintenance inspections – one at the beginning of the surrender notice period and one before you surrender the lease. Please let your local Sales Consultant know if you have any issue with us completing these checks.

The local Sales Consultant and our maintenance team will carry out an inspection on the property. This will establish if the property has been damaged and what action needs to be taken to restore it. We will obtain a quote for the work but you do have the option to carry out the work yourselves. The contractor you employ will however need to provide all of the relevant insurances and qualifications.

At some point in the near future, we may ask for your permission to enter the apartment to show potential buyers around. We will be in touch over the coming weeks to discuss this further.

When we have secured a buyer for a property, we can then answer questions on whether carpets and/or furniture need to stay or be removed. In some cases, the new buyer will be interested in taking keeping the carpets in the property. If there are items of furniture that you would be interested in selling then please let the Sales Consultant know and they can inform the new buyer.

The following items must be left in the property:

- Large white button phone
- Grill pan
- Window keys
- Patio door keys
- Operating manuals for white goods
- Resident User Guide
- Pendant (if applicable)

Carpets and Curtains

All carpets and curtains should be removed from the property before the termination of the lease, unless an alternative arrangement has been made. For example, the new buyer of the property has agreed to keep the carpets.

The property has to be cleared of furniture and personal possessions before the date of surrender. Please note that if the property isn't empty by the day of surrender, it will cause a delay in the process. The vacant property will be inspected twice before the lease can be surrendered. The first inspection is to look at the cost of putting the

property back to its original state (this figure will be taken off the final settlement) and the second one is to inspect the work that has been carried out. However, the property may not always require any work.

Store Rooms

Each property is allocated to a store room for small items (Christmas decorations, suitcases, etc). Please remember to check the store room before surrender so that such items are not left behind. The village can let you know which store to check for that property and how access can be gained.

Ending a Tenancy on Behalf of a Deceased Tenant

We understand that dealing with a death can be difficult and we have provided this information to help families with ending the tenancy. We strongly advise that residents make a will to avoid any potential issues at the end of tenancy. There can be issues if this hasn't been done, particularly if there is value in the deceased estate.

At the end of tenancy, we are required to see the death certificate, and see a copy of the will. This is required for us to know that the family member (or other person) is authorised to deal with the deceased's affairs. In situations where the will is disputed, and there is value in the estate, then probate will need to be applied for. In such circumstances we reserve the right to continue charging for the property as we may be unable to allow access to the property or accept notice until probate is concluded. Under the terms of the tenancy agreement, four weeks' or one months' Notice is required in order to end the tenancy. The precise notice period depends on their specific tenancy agreement. However, provide we are satisfied that the person acting on the deceased's behalf is authorised to do so, we can allow access to the property during the notice period to clear out personal possessions.

Housing Benefit

If the resident was receiving Housing Benefit entitlement this will stop on the first Monday after the date of death. From this date onwards, full housing costs will be charged to the estate of the deceased. The estate will be charged full housing costs during the notice period up to the Monday after the keys / key cards are returned. If there are any rent arrears on the account after the keys / key cards have been returned, the estate will be invoiced. It may take a few weeks to send this because of adjustments to Housing Benefit that may be required before the account can be finalised.

Access to apartments

We will need to see proof that you are authorised to act on the deceased's behalf. This should be a copy of the will and the death certificate. We may also require a solicitor's letter confirming that you are executor of the will. Generally, on the death of a tenant the tenancy passes to the estate care of an Executor and we would arrange access for this person. Otherwise we will keep the property secure to ensure all belongings are kept safe until such time that this is established.

Emptying the Property

We would expect the family to begin the arrangements to empty the apartment. The normal notice period is four weeks or one month (dependent on the tenancy agreement) from the Monday after the date of death. However, if you need longer than this, please contact The Housing Officer. Please note that the estate will be charged until the keys / key cards are returned.

If there are items that you would like to dispose of please arrange with the local council to remove them, although most council's charge a fee for this. We reserve the right to dispose of any goods remaining in the property at the end of tenancy, and the charge the estate for the cost of removal and disposal.

Health and Safety

To comply with Health and Safety regarding water hygiene and legionella testing at the location, the maintenance team on site will need to access the property on a weekly basis to run the taps in the kitchen and bathroom. We will liaise with the relevant family member about this and are able gain access using a master key for this purpose. Notice needs to be in writing which the executor of the estate should do. If there is no estate, we may be able to accept notice from the next of kin. We will still require a copy of the death certificate.

Palliative Home Care Equipment Register

Many people are able to be nursed at home because different services supply equipment to help, such as special beds, hoists, wheelchairs, bathroom aids, oxygen machines and many others.

This register has been designed so that you can keep track of this equipment to arrange for its return if it is no longer needed. Each supplier will give also give you their own contact details, so you may want to keep this information together with the register.

There is also a section on the form where you can note the date and time arranged for return/collection as well as a column to tick once this is completed.

What about the equipment you have purchased?

Provided it is something that can be appropriately cleaned for use by other people, your local hospital, hospice or Red Cross may be able to use certain items of equipment to help patients / families who are unable to afford to buy equipment themselves.

What about medication?

The nurses who have been supporting care at home may be able to collect these for you and arrange the safe disposal of any medicines of any kind. Unfortunately these cannot be used for any other patient and must be destroyed but this should be done by a pharmacist with access to proper facilities. Please do not dispose of unused medication down the sink or toilet. If a doctor or nurse is unable to collect these from you they should be taken to a pharmacy for safe disposal.

To find out more about informing companies and organisations, please visit our website: www.bereavementadvice.org



Call freephone: **0800 258 5556**

Palliative Home Care Equipment Register

Equipment	Supplier	Telephone	Date collection booked	Collection date / time		Notes

www.bereavementadvice.org

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We appreciate that this is a difficult time and understand that clearing a property of possessions in these difficult circumstances can be stressful and upsetting.

Disposing of bulky items can be difficult and expensive. At ExtraCare we want to make the process of clearing out furniture as stress free as possible by giving you the option of donating any unwanted pre-loved items to us. We offer a free collection service for any large furniture or bulky items and we will even take away any smaller household goods or clothing and accessory items at the same time.

All donations of good quality, pre-loved furniture will raise funds to support our care services throughout the village.

All we ask is that the furniture is in a clean condition with no rips or stains and upholstered items have a Fire Label attached. Unfortunately we are not able to take mattresses or upholstered bed bases.

If you would like to arrange a furniture collection or just discuss this further please Telephone: 024 7650 7903 or email: donations@extracare.org.uk.

For smaller donations our village locations have either a donation station located within the village or have a regular collection service from our local charity shop. Please speak to the village staff who will advise you on how access these services.

Give your unwanted furniture **a new home**



**FREE
COLLECTION
SERVICE**

We are offering a free furniture collection service in your area, making it even easier to donate to our charity. All donations of good quality, pre-loved furniture will raise funds to create better lives for older people and free up valuable space in your home.

Please call or e-mail to arrange collection:

☎ 024 7650 7903

✉ donations@extracare.org.uk

giftaid it

Ask us about Gift Aid,
it increases the amount of
money we can raise from
your donation by **25%**

Putting your kindness to good use

The money raised from your donations helps to support over 4,000 residents living within our villages and schemes.

When we open the doors to our latest development, Solihull Village, residents will have access to a range of support services funded by your generous donations.

Enriched Opportunities Programme, (EOP)
Supporting people living with dementia

Locksmith Service
Supporting people in periods of mental need, anxiety or low mood

Well-being Service
Promoting healthy lifestyles

Gold Standards End of Life Care Service
Making the final stage of someone's life comfortable and dignified

Care Services
Helping those who need care and can't cover the full cost

Research and Innovation
Continuously improving the way we create better lives for older people

Tips from Residents

Change the name on all bills, insurance policies etc. into the name of the surviving spouse as soon as possible in order to avoid policies being voided.

A change of address does not necessarily require a change to your Will.

If you wish to opt in to the M1 daily welfare check let a member of staff know.

If there are any questions with regards to your lease or maintenance agreement, your first point of call should be your local Village Sales Consultant. They will be able to answer the more basic questions. However, if it is specific legal questions you have, you are advised to seek independent legal advice

Useful Organisations

Bereavement Register

020 7089 6403

0800 082 1230 (automated phone line registration service)

thebereavementregister.org.uk

By registering with this free service, the names and addresses of the person who has died are removed from mailing lists, stopping most advertising mail within six weeks.

Bereavement Advice Centre

0800 634 9494

There are many practical matters to attend to when someone dies. Bereavement Advice Centre supports and advises people on what they need to do after a death.

Cruse Bereavement Care (England, Wales and Northern Ireland)

0808 808 1677

cruse.org.uk

Provides bereavement support, either face to face or over the phone, from trained volunteers around the UK.

Macmillan Cancer Support

0808 808 00 00

macmillan.org.uk

Provides practical, medical and financial support for people affected by cancer.

Meetup

meetup.com

[Better lives for older people](#)

www.extracare.org.uk

A free website where you can find local groups of people with similar interests for conversation and support.

Money Advice Service

Free and impartial money advice on a range of matters including how to deal with money after death, from paying for the funeral to looking after the paperwork and household bills.

0800 138 7777

<https://www.moneyadviceservice.org.uk/en>

NHS website

nhs.uk/livewell/bereavement

Information for bereaved family and friends, and a local bereavement support search facility.

Scope

0808 800 3333

scope.org.uk

Practical information and emotional support for anyone with a learning disability or physical impairment.

SupportLine

01708 765 200

supportline.org.uk

Confidential and free emotional support for children, young adults and adults by telephone, email and post.

Funeral planning

[Better lives for older people](#)

www.extracare.org.uk

Association of Green Funeral Directors

0330 221 1018

greenfd.org.uk

An organisation that can help you find a funeral director in your area with eco-friendly funeral options.

Funeral Planning Authority

0845 6019619

funeralplanningauthority.co.uk

Trace a funeral plan through their registered funeral plan providers.

National Association of Funeral Directors

0121 711 1343

nafd.org.uk

Find a registered funeral director near you or get some advice about organising a funeral.

National Society of Allied and Independent Funeral Directors

0345 230 6777

saif.org.uk

Find an independent funeral director in the UK.

Natural Death Centre

01962 712 690

naturaldeath.org.uk

If you're looking for help, support, advice or guidance planning a funeral, either for yourself or for someone close to you, the Natural Death Centre can help. The website includes a list of green burial sites and advice on woodland burials.

Better lives for older people

www.extracare.org.uk

Ask a member of staff for help to access documents or information.

The ExtraCare Charitable Trust, registered charity number 327816, is a company limited by guarantee and registered in England and Wales as company number 2205136. Its registered office is at 7 Harry Weston Road, Binley Business Park, Binley, Coventry, CV3 2SN.

www.extracare.org.uk

This pack contains information from the following sources;

funeralguide.co.uk

mariecurie.org.uk

bereavementadvice.org

Cruse Bereavement Project

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The
ExtraCare
Charitable Trust

A registered charity since 1988