



CHARTER FOR THE BEREAVED
The charter identifies the following 33 rights

Burial Procedure	1	It is your right to have a burial organised and conducted in a dignified and orderly manner, supported by competent, professional and caring cemetery staff.
	2	It is your right to inspect statutory cemetery records.
Grave Choice	3	It is your right to purchase a private grave for a period not exceeding 100 years. (This “right of burial” is a grave for one or more burials, and upon which you can place a memorial. To this purchase cost, a burial fee is also payable.)
	4	It is your right to choose to be buried in an unpurchased grave. (You cannot reserve space for further burials in this type of grave, nor do you have any right to place a memorial. Further un-related burials will occur in the future, the grave being “re-cycled”. For each burial, a fee is payable).
Cemetery Memorials	5	It is your right to place a memorial within the constraints of regulations in force or to leave the grave unmarked.
	6	It is your right and responsibility to maintain a memorial upon a grave during the period of grave rights granted to you. The memorial cannot be disturbed or moved during this period without your express permission, unless it poses a safety hazard. The safe erection and maintenance of the memorial is your responsibility.
	7	Except where Charter members are the sole suppliers of memorials, it is your right to use any memorial mason of your choice, provided they are not prohibited by the Charter member.
Baby and Infant Graves	8	It is your right to be offered an individual grave for a baby or infant.
	9	It is your right to be able to purchase an adult grave for the burial of a baby or infant, with sufficient depth remaining to allow adult burials.
Burials in private land	10	It is your right to receive further information on burial in private land
Cremation Procedure	11	It is your right to organise and conduct a cremation in a dignified and orderly manner, supported by competent, professional and caring crematorium staff.
	12	It is your right to inspect the crematoriums under normal working conditions.
Cremated remains and memorialisation	13	It is your right to be offered a Book of Remembrance memorial, set in a Hall of Remembrance. This must include a designated place for floral tributes.
Ceremonies and belief	14	It is your right to hold a burial or cremation service at the cemetery or crematorium and define the type of music and ceremony.
	15	It is your right to define the type of religious or secular (non-religious) format of the service.

Coffins and Alternatives	16	It is your right to choose the type and design of coffin, within the constraints of availability, regulation and safe materials.
	17	It is your right to obtain a coffin via your Charter member (biodegradable type).
Communication	18	It is your right to receive a prompt response to any form of communication within the times specified by each Charter member.
	19	It is your right to be given a table of cemetery and crematorium fees upon request
Environmental issues	20	It is your right to be made aware of all known environmental issues relating to bereavement services (full details are given in the Reference copy of the Charter for the Bereaved).
Social and Community Aspects	21	It is your right to receive a service that recognises your needs, without unfairness or discrimination eg religious belief, ethnic needs, disability etc.
Funerals without Funeral Directors (independent funerals)	22	It is your right to organise a funeral without the use of a Funeral Director
	23	It is your right, as executor (or next of kin) to be given the body by a mortuary, hospital etc in order to carry out a funeral.
	24	It is your right to be given a leaflet by your Charter member describing how to arrange an independent funeral.
Maintenance of Grounds And grave digging	25	It is your right to be shown a specified standard of grounds maintenance. Where standards fail to meet the specification, you have the right to complain.
Regulations	26	It is your right to be given a list of regulations used by your Charter member.
	27	It is your right to be given a written explanation of the reason why a regulation has been used to restrict or otherwise influence your rights.
Staff and expertise	28	It is your right to receive a quality service provided by training and qualified staff. Where service standards fail, you have a right to question the level of expertise shown and to receive assurances regarding the ability of those involved.
Inspection	29	It is your right to be given an inspection of the cemetery or crematorium at any reasonable time.
	30	It is your right to be given a copy of the “Guiding Principles of Burial and Cremation Services” or the “Code of Cremation Practice” under which your Charter members operates.
Grievance procedure	31	It is your right to use the grievance procedure if you are dissatisfied about any service provided by your Charter member. You can complain “on the spot” if you have the opportunity. If you continue to be dissatisfied, a series of stages leading to arbitration can be followed. Copies of the grievance procedure are available from your Charter member. Any Charter member who fails to offer the specified rights will have their Charter membership withdrawn.
Using a Funeral Director	32	It is your right to be given a copy of the item “Information on using a Funeral Director” (from the Reference Copy of the Charter for the Bereaved) by your Charter member. A small fee may be payable. This describes the funeral “package”, the absence of price transparency, the impact of larger commercial firms, funeral pre-payment plans, etc.

Embalming**33**

It is your right to be given a copy of the item "Information on Embalming" (from the Reference Copy of the Charter for the Bereaved) by your Charter member. A small fee may be payable. This describes process of embalming, often referred to as cosmetic treatment by funeral directors. It addresses the issues of environmental impact and whether the process is necessary.

IMPROVING SERVICES IN THE FUTURE

ICCM have identified many "targets" to continuously improve the service for the bereaved. These may become rights after consultation and discussion. They are detailed in the Reference Copy of the Charter for the Bereaved, which is used by each Charter member. These targets often reflect new funeral innovations in various parts of the country but cannot be guaranteed nationwide. As they may be of interest to you, they are briefly described below:

Burial Procedure Charter members will develop national service standards regarding the reception and handling of funerals.

Charter members will improve protection against inclement weather at burials ceremonies.

Grave Choice Charter members will consider improving grave choice by offering three grave designs, the lawn type with a headstone, the traditional grave with a full memorial, and a natural option such as woodland burial.

Charter members will support a change in the law to allow the re-use of old graves, particularly in areas where burial is not possible due to a shortage of new ground. Charter members will provide graves for cremated remains.

Cemetery Memorials Charter members will encourage greater artistic input into memorials. A memorial should reflect individuality and the spirit of the community.