

Here's an easy-to-use checklist to help older adults start conversations about what they would like to happen to their body after death. It's designed to be gentle, practical, and inclusive of different personal situations.

# Is it time for a cuppa and a chat?

## Before You Start

- Choose a calm, private time and place
- Avoid stressful or emotional moments
- Plan a gentle, practical way to introduce the topic
- Choose someone you think might be able to help you take action on the topic; this person does not have to be the person responsible for taking care of everything after your death, but someone who you think you can talk to about it

## Starting the Conversation

- Begin with a neutral reason (e.g. getting organised)
- Emphasise peace of mind, not death
- Ask permission to talk about it
- Respect their response if they hesitate, they just might not be the right person to help you with this

## Reflecting on Your Personal Wishes

- Have you thought about what you would prefer after death?
  - o Burial
  - o Cremation
  - o Alternative options (e.g. green burial)
- Are your wishes influenced by:
  - o Religion or beliefs
  - o Environmental concerns
  - o Family traditions



## Deciding Who Should Be Involved in the Conversation

- Choosing who to talk to:
  - o Family members
  - o Close friends
  - o A trusted advisor (e.g. solicitor, faith leader)
- If you have no close family or friends consider:
  - o Identifying a professional (e.g. solicitor or executor)
  - o Informing a neighbour, GP, faith leader or care provider that your plans exist

## State Your Preferences Clearly.

- What type of arrangement do you want?
  - o Burial or cremation
- Any specific wishes?
  - o Location (cemetery, ashes scattered?)
  - o Type of coffin or urn
  - o Simple vs. traditional arrangements

## Consider Practical Details

- Do you have a preferred funeral provider?
- Have you set aside funds or a funeral plan?
- Where should arrangements take place?



## Record Your Wishes

- Write your wishes down clearly and record them in:
  - o Your will
  - o A separate document or letter of wishes
- Keep copies in an accessible place

## Informing the Right People

- Make sure someone knows your wishes e.g.:
  - o Executor of your will
  - o Family or trusted contacts
- Tell them where documents are stored
- If you have family, discuss expectations openly to avoid disagreements
- If you rely on friends, confirm they are comfortable helping carry out your wishes
- If you have no personal contacts:
  - o Ensure a professional is formally appointed
  - o Provide clear written instructions

## In Conclusion

These conversations can feel difficult, but they are a gift to the people who may need to make decisions later. Clear guidance helps ensure your wishes are respected.

More helpful websites at: [www.opaal.org.uk/campaigns/](http://www.opaal.org.uk/campaigns/)