

## Accomplish your purpose – set your goals

Tick the statements you agree with, then you will know exactly what you want to achieve.

The funeral must

- mark the passing of this human life in a way which reflects its importance
- create an appropriate sense of occasion
- be a precious gift to the person who has died, the last physical thing I can do for them
- express any spiritual views of the person who has died
- enable family, friends and neighbours who were not present at the death to pay their respects and say goodbye. The opportunity to make the effort to come means a lot to them.
- enable them to come face to face with the finality of what has happened. The presence of the body will assist this
- enable the communities of family, friends, work colleagues and neighbours to come together and stand by each other
- enable these communities to begin to reconfigure themselves: to regroup and repair the gap left by the person who has died
- confront the great mystery of death and try to make some sort of sense of it
- acknowledge that, inevitably, people will be thinking of others they have known who have died. They need to be made to feel comfortable about this
- reflect how everyone feels about the death and speak for their feelings, especially their sorrow
- enable people to play a part—remembering always that their presence is participation
- enable everyone to express their feelings
- enable them to have their say
- enable and encourage people to comfort each other, to give and to share strength
- talk about the person who has died—talk *to* them if they like—and say what needs to be said, take stock of what he or she means to others and, more important, will go on meaning to them
- consider how the work and the values of the person who has died can be carried forward by those who are left
- celebrate life, and in particular the life of the person who has died

## A Good Funeral Guide factsheet

- talk honestly about the person who has died—because no one is perfect
- fix memories and feelings and establish that they live on. If the person who has died was very old, or had passed through a period of dementia, to remember them as they were in their prime
- say thank you to the person who has died
- let the person who has died go with dignity, love and peace
- invite everyone to refreshments afterwards
- ask them to make a donation to charity in remembrance

When you come to create the funeral ceremony, make sure that it meets, at some stage, the needs of all the statements you have ticked. If you are employing a celebrant, give them a copy of this document.