





Beyond...

**FUNERAL
COSTS
REPORT
2017**

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FUNERAL COSTS 2017

In the UK, the current average cost of cremation is £753 and the average cost of a burial is £1,792. The average total cost of a funeral booked through Beyond, including funeral director fees, is £2,629.

At Beyond, we gather costs for funeral services around the UK and feed them into our comparison service, which you can use for both immediate funerals and funeral plans. A major contribution to the final cost which you'll be quoted – typically around a third to a half of the total – is the crematorium and cemetery fee. This is set by the owner of the cemetery or crematorium.

Most of the crematoria and cemeteries in the UK update their pricing at the start of the new tax year, on April 1st. At the start of April, we set out to gather all the new fees and feed them back into our comparison engine, ensuring that the figures you're quoted on the Beyond site are as accurate as possible.

To anyone familiar with the funeral industry it should come as no surprise that fees have risen well above the current rate of inflation in most locations for yet another year. The map below shows the most and least expensive parts of the country for burial and cremation, alongside the national average and the country-wide percentage increase from 2016.

2017

BURIAL COSTS 2017

The burial fees which we've gathered are as close as you can get to the 'standard' burial fee. These are for the burial of an adult who is resident of the borough where the cemetery is found. This fee is made up of two separate costs; the interment, or digging fee for a single-depth grave, and the Exclusive Right of Burial, the fee which is payed to the owner of the cemetery to lease the land.

In the tables below you'll notice some real outliers in terms of burial costs. These have been excluded from our regional averages in order to make these figures as representative of regional burial and cremation fees as possible.

Remember that these fees do not include the services of the funeral director, or other costs such as flowers and coffins.

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BURIAL COSTS 2017

10 most expensive places to be buried in 2017

| Cemetery | Owner/Authority | Location | Price |
|------------------------------|--|----------|---------|
| Highgate Cemetery | Highgate Cemetery Charity | London | £18,325 |
| Fulham Palace Road Cemetery | London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham | London | £12,464 |
| Margravine Cemetery | London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham | London | £12,464 |
| Kensal Green Cemetery | The General Cemetery Company | London | £12,225 |
| Tottenham Cemetery | Dignity PLC | London | £8,174 |
| East Finchley Cemetery | Westminster City Council | London | £5,800 |
| Battersea New Cemetery | London Borough of Wandsworth | London | £4,697 |
| Putney Lower Common Cemetery | London Borough of Wandsworth | London | £4,697 |
| Wandsworth Cemetery | London Borough of Wandsworth | London | £4,697 |
| Putney Vale Cemetery | London Borough of Wandsworth | London | £4,697 |

2017

BURIAL COSTS 2017

10 least expensive places to be buried in 2017

| Cemetery | Owner/Authority | Location | Price |
|-----------------------|--------------------------------------|-------------|-------|
| Cross Cemetery | Fermanagh and Omagh District Council | Enniskillen | £261 |
| Fintona Cemetery | Fermanagh and Omagh District Council | Tyrone | £261 |
| Green Hill Cemetery | Fermanagh and Omagh District Council | Omagh | £261 |
| Coolhill Cemetery | Mid-Ulster District Council | Dungannon | £262 |
| Cottagequinn Cemetery | Mid-Ulster District Council | Dungannon | £276 |
| Forthill Cemetery | Mid-Ulster District Council | Cookstown | £276 |
| Polepatrick Cemetery | Mid-Ulster District Council | Magherafelt | £276 |
| City Cemetery | Derry and Strabane District Council | Derry | £347 |
| Alla Claudy Cemetery | Derry and Strabane District Council | Claudy | £347 |
| Ballyoan Cemetery | Derry and Strabane District Council | Derry | £347 |

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BURIAL COSTS 2017

10 highest rises in burial costs in 2017

| Cemetery | Owner/Authority | Location | % Difference from 2016 |
|------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|-----------|------------------------|
| Clandon Wood Natural Burial Ground | Clandon Wood Natural Burial Ground | Guildford | +68.3% |
| North Watford Cemetery | Watford Borough Council | Watford | +49.1% |
| Monkshill Cemetery | Newry, Mourne & Down District Council | Newry | +41.1% |
| Upper Dromore Road Cemetery | Newry, Mourne & Down District Council | Newry | +41.1% |
| Kilbroney Road Cemetery | Newry, Mourne & Down District Council | Rostrevor | +41.1% |
| Canley Garden Cemetery | Coventry City Council | Coventry | +39.2% |
| Lentons Lane Cemetery | Coventry City Council | Coventry | +39.2% |
| London Road Cemetery | Coventry City Council | Coventry | +39.2% |
| St. Paul's Road Cemetery | Coventry City Council | Coventry | +39.2% |
| Walsgrave Cemetery | Coventry City Council | Coventry | +39.2% |

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BURIAL COSTS 2017

For anyone who saw our round-up of last year's data these results should cause little surprise. Burial fees in Northern Ireland have historically been very small in comparison with the rest of the UK, and with London in particular, where land is at more of a premium.

While it's relatively easy to understand why, given the cost of living in the capital, it might cost so much to lease land for burial in London, it's harder to understand why the digging fee should cost so much more in comparison with what a Northern Irish citizen should expect to pay. The £118 charged by Fermanagh and Omagh District Council is almost pocket change when compared to the £1,850 charged by Highgate Cemetery. This makes it 15 times more expensive to dig a grave in Highgate than it does in Fermanagh and Omagh.

Highgate Cemetery is not an isolated incident here. The digging fee for Kingston Cemetery on the other side of the capital comes in at £1,700, which is 13 times more expensive than the cheapest fee in the UK.

There was only one cemetery which can be said to have decreased its fees this year. GreenAcres Woodland Burial's site in Grayshott did so by introducing a new type of burial plot, which means that the fee for burial in this site has dropped by 28.6%. Although 10.4% of cemeteries for which we were able to collect data did not raise their pricing since last year, 80.5% did so above the UK's rate of inflation, and 48% have increased their pricing at a rate of at least double the rate of inflation.

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CREMATION COSTS 2017

In the majority of places cremation costs have also risen above the rate of inflation for another year, although not as drastically as burial fees have.

The costs quoted below are indicative of the fee an adult resident can expect to pay inside of normal operating hours on a weekday. Most crematoria will now facilitate a direct cremation service, which often takes place in the early hours of the morning. Outside of normal hours there is less demand and mourners are not permitted to attend, resulting in a lower price.

Conversely, services on a weekend and early evening on a weekday are in high demand and often come at a higher price.

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CREMATION COSTS 2017

10 most expensive places to be cremated in 2017

| Crematorium | Owner/Authority | Location | Price |
|------------------|-----------------|-------------|-------|
| Beckenham | Dignity PLC | London | £999 |
| Surrey & Sussex | Dignity PLC | Crawley | £999 |
| Randalls Park | Dignity PLC | Leatherhead | £999 |
| Heart of England | Dignity PLC | Nuneaton | £999 |
| Moray | Dignity PLC | Moray | £999 |
| Dundee | Dignity PLC | Dundee | £999 |
| Oxford | Dignity PLC | Oxford | £999 |
| The Counties | Dignity PLC | Northampton | £999 |
| Chichester | Dignity PLC | Chichester | £999 |
| Norwich | Dignity PLC | Norwich | £989 |

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CREMATION COSTS 2017

10 least expensive places to be cremated in 2017

| Crematorium | Owner/Authority | Location | Price |
|----------------------|---|--------------|-------|
| South West Middlesex | South West Middlesex Crematorium Board | Feltham | £490 |
| Thornhill | City of Cardiff Council | Cardiff | £540 |
| Crewe | Cheshire East Council | Crewe | £550 |
| Macclesfield | Cheshire East Council | Macclesfield | £550 |
| North East Surrey | North East Surrey Crematorium Board | London | £555 |
| West Hertfordshire | West Hertfordshire Joint Crematorium Committee | Watford | £560 |
| Parc Gwyn | Pembrokeshire County Council | Narbeth | £564 |
| Chilterns | Chilterns Crematorium Joint Committee | Amersham | £575 |
| Mortlake | Mortlake Crematorium Board | London | £575 |
| Margam | Margam and District Joint Crematorium Committee | Port Talbot | £585 |

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CREMATION COSTS 2017

10 highest rises in cremation costs in 2017

| Crematorium | Owner/Authority | Location | % Difference from 2016 |
|----------------|--------------------------------------|-------------------|------------------------|
| Cheltenham | Cheltenham Borough Council | Cheltenham | +32.2% |
| Thorncliffe | Barrow-in-Furness Borough Council | Barrow-in-Furness | +29.9% |
| South Essex | London Borough of Havering | Upminster | +26.9% |
| City Road | Sheffield City Council | Sheffield | +19.4% |
| Hutcliffe Wood | Sheffield City Council | Sheffield | +19.4% |
| Rochdale | Rochdale Borough Council | Rochdale | +16.3% |
| Middleton | Rochdale Borough Council | Middleton | +16.3% |
| Canley | Coventry City Council | Coventry | +15% |
| Greenock | Inverclyde Council | Greenock | +12.2% |
| Haycombe | Bath and North East Somerset Council | Bath | +12% |

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CREMATION COSTS 2017

It's clear from the above tables that crematorium fees are less dictated by location than burial fees. Land does not need to be leased for a cremation and running costs are roughly equivalent from one crematorium to another.

It's interesting, if unsurprising, to see that the ten costliest are all operated by a private company, Dignity PLC. In fact 17 of the top 20 most expensive crematoria are operated by Dignity, who set almost blanket pricing throughout the country.

In stark contrast to the ten most expensive cemeteries in the land, all of which were in London, there is only one London-based crematorium among the ten costliest, and this cost is identical across another six crematoria, all in different places throughout the country. The ten cheapest are all council-owned and even features two London locations.

This apparent lack of rhyme and reason in how crematorium costs are set is even clearer when we observe the arbitrary nature of percentage increases.

There were no crematoria who decreased their fees this year, although there were 38 who also did not increase their prices from last year. That makes for 57 crematoria who increased pricing either below or in line with the rate of inflation out of a total of 278. Conversely, 79.5% of crematoria in the UK have increased their pricing above the rate of inflation, and an astonishing 62.6% have increased their pricing at a rate of at least double the rate of inflation.

CONCLUSION

It's a sad sign of the times that this data is unlikely to surprise many people who have had to organise a funeral in the last few years. It's clear that funeral costs are rising well above the rate of inflation across the board, and while funerals are still affordable in some parts of the country, it's safe to say that most people should expect to pay significant sums to say goodbye to their loved ones.

Remember, however, that you can shop around and work with your chosen funeral director to arrange a funeral that's both right for you and your loved one, while also working within your budget. You can also look into taking out a tailored funeral plan, which will lock in your chosen funeral director's fees, and will also help to meet unavoidable costs such as crematorium and cemetery fees.

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RESEARCH METHODS

Our funeral costs research is the only comprehensive and complete funeral costs research conducted in the UK. Unlike other research conducted through surveys, limited mystery shopping and anecdotal evidence, our data represents the full and actual geographic data.

The report is produced using the following methods:

- Collecting costs for all crematoriums and cemeteries in the UK. Fieldwork took place between April and July 2016
- Using our internal UK funeral directors' costs data, which is maintained by the funeral directors themselves.

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