



**Law
Commission**
Reforming the law



**Easy
Read**

Changing the law about burial and cremation

Tell us what you think



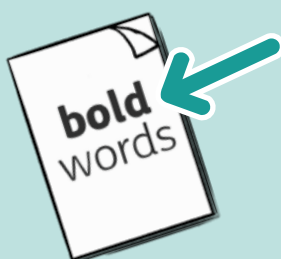
Easy Read



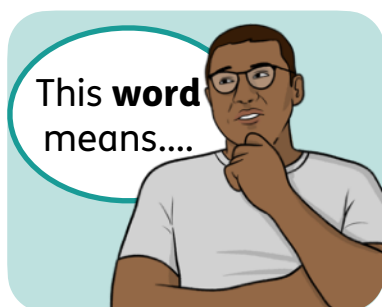
This is an Easy Read version of some information. It may not include all of the information, but it will tell you about the important parts.



This Easy Read booklet uses easier words and pictures. Some people may still want help to read it.



Some words are in **bold** - this means the writing is thicker and darker. These are important words in the booklet.



Sometimes, if a bold word is hard to understand, we will explain what it means.



Blue and underlined words show links to websites and email addresses. You can click on these links on a computer.

What is in this booklet

About this booklet	4
What do you think?	7
Why the law needs to change	10
What happens to bodies at the moment	12
About reusing and reclaiming graves.....	13
The law about burial grounds	16
Laws about cremation	17
What happens next	20
Find out more	21

About this booklet



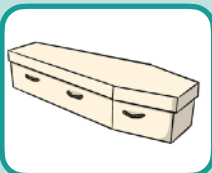
Law
Commission
Reforming the law

This booklet is from the Law Commission of England and Wales.

Our job is to suggest how the government should change the law.



We think the government should change the law about what happens to our bodies after we die.



Most people choose **burial** or **cremation** for their body after death.

Burial means when someone's body is put in the ground after they die.

Cremation is when someone's body is turned into ashes after they die.



Old

But some of the laws about burial and cremation are very old.



We want to know what you think about burial and cremation, to help us decide what the new laws should be.

We want to hear from as many different people and organisations as possible, like:



- Organisations that run burial grounds and cremation sites.



- Funeral directors.



- Anyone who is interested in what happens to our bodies after we die.



You need to tell us what you think by 9th January 2025.



This booklet will tell you more about the law, and how to tell us what you think.

What do you think?



We have ideas about what we think the law should say about burial and cremation.

We have put these ideas in a report called a **Consultation Paper**.



Before you tell us what you think, you should read about the ideas in the Consultation Paper on our website:

lawcom.gov.uk/project/burial-and-cremation



You do not have to read the whole paper or answer all the questions.



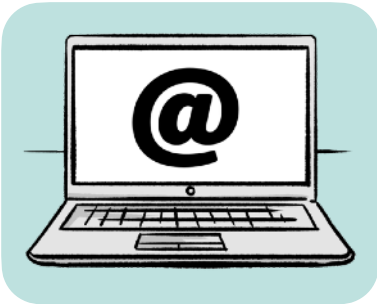
This booklet will tell you about some of the most important information in the Consultation Paper.

Telling us what you think



You can answer our questions in a form on our website:

lawcom.gov.uk/project/burial-and-cremation



If you cannot answer using the online form, you can tell us what you think by email to:

bcnfm@lawcommission.gov.uk

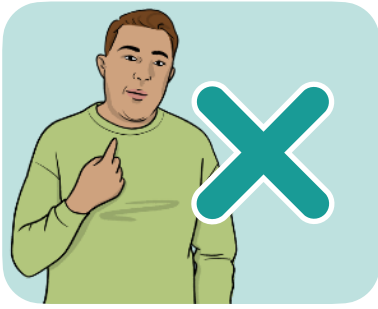


Or by post to:

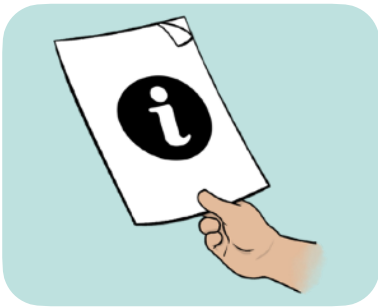
Burial and Cremation project
Property, Family and Trust Law team
Law Commission
1st Floor
52 Queen Anne's Gate
London
SW1H 9AG



If you send your answers by post, it would be helpful to also send them by email if you can.

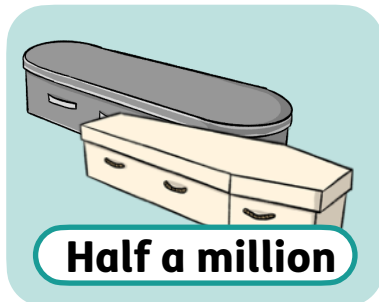


You should not include information about yourself or other people in your answers.



This is because your answers will be shared with the government and could be made public.

Why the law needs to change



About half a million people die in England and Wales each year.



Each death affects many other people.



The laws about burial and cremation affect how we remember people we know who have died.



The laws do not do enough to protect people who bury or cremate the bodies of their family and friends.



There is a chance that we will run out of space for burials in the future.

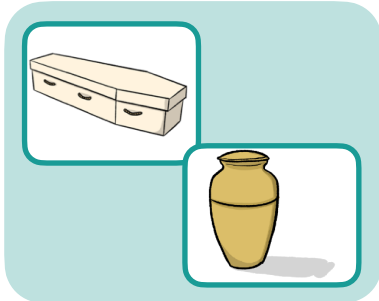


New laws could help with this.



We want to make sure that the laws about burial and cremation work well to protect everyone.

What happens to bodies at the moment



Most people choose burial or cremation for their body after death.



There are different places to bury bodies, like in a churchyard, in a council cemetery, or in a private cemetery.

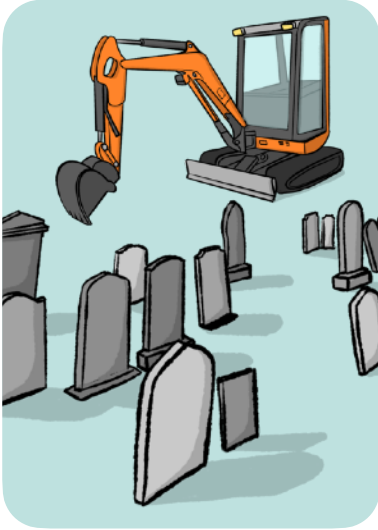


Cremation has become popular over the last hundred years.



Different religions and cultures have different beliefs about what to do when someone dies.

About reusing and reclaiming graves



Reusing old graves is when old **remains** are taken out of a **grave**, and the space is used to bury more people.

Remains are what is left of a body after it has been in the ground for a long time.

A **grave** is a place where someone is buried.



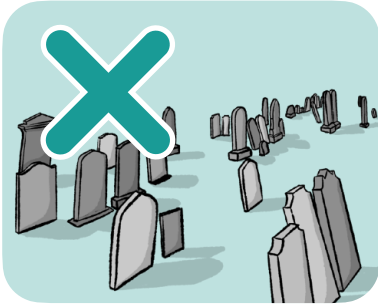
Reclaiming a grave is when the space above old burials is used for new burials.



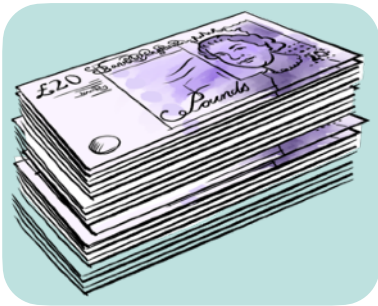
Reusing old graves is common in other countries.



Reusing graves is not allowed in many places in England and Wales.



But we are running out of space for graves in England and Wales.



It would cost a lot of money to get new land ready for graves.



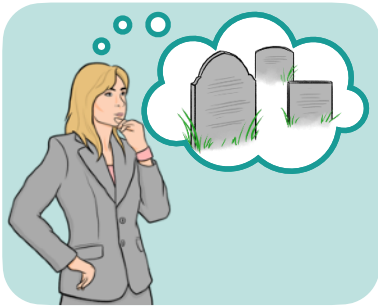
This would mean that burials would cost more money.



It would also mean that land could not be used for anything else, like building houses.



Reusing graves could give us more space to keep doing burials.



We want to give organisations that run burial grounds the choice to reuse graves if they want to.



They would have to ask people in the local area before they could reuse graves.



We want to make sure that people in England and Wales agree with the law about reusing and reclaiming graves.

The law about burial grounds



We want to change the laws so that we can use closed burial grounds again.



Closed burial grounds are usually next to churches.



Local councils would look after the burial grounds if they were opened again.



We want to make a law so that churches in Wales can give burial grounds to councils to look after, like they do in England.



We know that this will cost councils in Wales a lot of money.

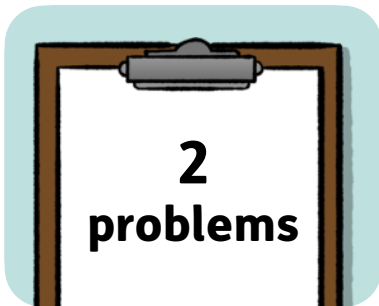
Laws about cremation



The laws about cremation have been changed more recently than the laws about burial.



Next year, we will be asking more about who should decide what happens to someone's body after they die.



This year, we want to know what you think about 2 problems with cremation.



We also want to know what you think about where we should let new **crematoria** be built.

Crematoria are places where cremations happen.

1. Ashes that have not been collected



At the moment, crematoria can bury or **scatter ashes** if they have not been collected after 14 days.

Scatter ashes means to put the ashes of someone who has died in a special place.



At the moment, funeral directors cannot bury or scatter ashes.



We think funeral directors should be able to give ashes that have not been collected for 4 weeks to crematoria.

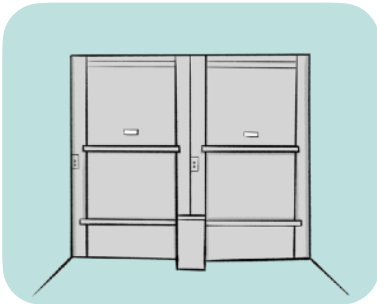


Crematoria could then bury or scatter the ashes.

2. Pacemakers



Pacemakers are small machines that are put inside your body to help your heart beat regularly.



Pacemakers have to be taken out of bodies before the bodies are turned into ashes.



This means that funeral directors have a lot of pacemakers that they have to keep.



We want to change the law so that funeral directors can get rid of pacemakers if the family of the person who has died does not want them.

What happens next



We will read what everyone thinks about the changes to the law.



We will then suggest new laws to the government.

The new laws we suggest will make sure that:



- There will be enough space to bury bodies in the future.



- The law about cremation is up to date.



- The government listens to what people think about burial and cremation.

Find out more



You can look at our website here:
lawcom.gov.uk

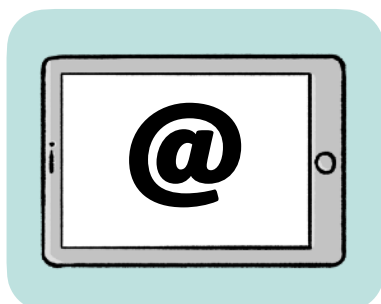


You can contact us by:

- Post:
1st Floor
Tower
52 Queen Anne's Gate
London
SW1H 9AG



- Phone: 020 3334 0200



- Email:
bcnfm@lawcommission.gov.uk

This Easy Read booklet was produced by easy-read-online.co.uk
The booklet includes images licensed from Photosymbols & Shutterstock.