

Questions asked ... *about our Chapel*

This leaflet will explain our Chapel of Rest, why families
visit and what you should expect



THE SEARSON FAMILY
FUNERAL SERVICE

*"We don't just arrange funerals, we create
meaningful days."*

www.thesearsonfamily.co.uk

0800 022 3309

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WHAT IS A CHAPEL OF REST?

The term 'Chapel of Rest' originated in the Victorian era, when funerals were predominantly religious ceremonies. The deceased would typically be laid to rest in their own home, but as societal views evolved, Funeral Directors began offering chapels on their premises. While the term 'Chapel of Rest' has persisted, it doesn't fully capture the essence of the room. It serves as a private space for families to spend time, and it affords a comfortable, lounge-like atmosphere with soft lighting, where the deceased is presented in their coffin. This 'Private Room' provides a tranquil setting and a soothing environment and is available for short visits or extended stays, depending on each family's individual needs.

WHAT WILL I SEE?

When families visit the 'Chapel of Rest', they often have an image in mind of what they want to see. Expectations from memory impressions of when they were alive are natural. Even though we can provide exceptional care and preparation, we can't take away the reality of what has happened. Your loved one will look different, and this should be anticipated and expected. However, we can make them comfortable, look relaxed, at peace, and well cared for. Some families visit because they need to say 'Goodbye'; some visit because they feel they should, or because they are encouraged to.

The decision to visit should be based on your needs and what you want to achieve from the experience, and we will do all we can to make that moment as comfortable and rewarding as possible.

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WILL THEY LOOK DIFFERENT?

We are all unique individuals with our own personalities and characters. The way we look is expressed through smiles, mannerisms, and visual traits ... the way we communicate through body language, our hands, and how we sound. When we pass away, we are unable to express our character and personality, which is why people look so different. The most frequent comment families make is that the mouth doesn't look right, which is because of the lack of visual expression. We can dress them, make them comfortable, do their hair, but we can't take away the reality of what has happened.

HOW SHOULD WE DRESS THEM?

It is important to create elements of familiarity when preparing a loved one for a visit. With the characters' and personalities' presence diminished, having other points of focus really helps enhance the visit experience.

Clothing can be a key decision, and selecting the right garments should be based on what they would typically wear and what you would expect them to wear. Using a three-piece suit for someone who only ever wore jeans and a T-shirt wouldn't afford the best sense of familiarity. Hilda Ogden from Coronation Street was defined by her signature Apron and Hair Curlers, it's who she is. Put her in a dress and take out the curlers, and then it wouldn't be the Hilda everyone knows. Clothing isn't about dressing someone up; it's about aiding the visual familiarity that made them. Ultimately, the choice should be yours, but what you wear significantly enhances familiarity, which is important.

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WHAT OTHER THINGS HELP THE VIEWING?

Our senses are more than just what we see; the sense of smell can conjure memories and a sense of familiarity. If they wore a favourite perfume or fragrance, this would support the sense of association; it's just another focal point. So too is music, playing their favourite songs in the background, the little things can make a significant difference to your viewing experience.

YOU DON'T KNOW HOW THEY LOOKED?

That is why we ask for some photographs so we can get an impression of their usual appearance. A picture speaks a thousand words; it can show their hairstyle and natural fullness, which can often be lost leading up to and after death. Recent photographs, casual photos that capture their everyday look. It doesn't mean we can create the image in the photograph, but they do help you picture them in your mind.

CAN WE TOUCH THEM?

Yes ... and when visiting the 'Chapel of Rest', we encourage physical contact and treat them with a sense of normality, which will help provide additional comfort. Holding their hand, stroking their hair, and even kissing them on the cheek are all acceptable gestures of affection.

HOW OFTEN CAN WE VISIT?

This will depend upon the type of preparation provided, and where we are in the natural process of Mother Nature. Visiting can begin once all the necessary legal documentation has been completed. We always book appointments for chapel visits, and should a natural change occur that we feel would compromise your visit, we will let you know in advance so you can decide whether to continue visiting.