7 Important Questions to Ask When Buying a Funeral Plan

What to check before you commit — and how to protect yourself

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A prepaid funeral plan can help you arrange and pay towards a funeral in advance. Before buying, check exactly what is covered, what could cost extra and how your money is protected.

How to use this guide

Work through each question before agreeing to any plan. If possible, do this with a family member or trusted friend.

- **Ask each question** directly to the plan provider before signing anything.
- If you are not satisfied with an answer, do not feel pressured to proceed.
- Start with the most important checks — particularly around FCA authorisation and what is covered.
- **Get all answers in writing** before committing to any plan or making any payment.

1. Is the funeral plan provider authorised by the FCA?

This is the most important check. Only buy from a provider that is properly authorised.

Use the Financial Conduct Authority's FCA Firm Checker to confirm the provider is authorised to enter into funeral plan contracts and administer existing plans.

Check the permissions under "What this firm can do".

Action: Check the provider on the FCA Firm Checker at fca.org.uk before proceeding with any application or payment.

2. What does the plan include — and what is excluded?

Not all funeral plans cover the same things. The detail is in the breakdown.

Ask for a clear breakdown of the services and costs covered.

Check for additional burial or cremation charges, and ask what your family might still need to pay when the funeral takes place.

Worth checking: Ask specifically whether the plan covers the funeral director's fees in full, or only a portion of them. Ask who would pay any shortfall and whether it could be met from your estate.

3. Are third-party costs guaranteed or covered by a contribution?

Some plans do not guarantee to cover all costs in full — particularly cremation or burial fees.

Some plans include a contribution towards costs such as cremation or burial fees rather than guaranteeing to cover them in full.

Ask whether that contribution increases over time and who would pay any shortfall.

Worth checking: If costs rise between now and the funeral, it is important to know in advance who is responsible for making up the difference.

4. What happens if I move to another area?

Your circumstances may change. Check whether the plan is flexible enough to move with you.

Check whether the plan can move with you, whether a different funeral director would be needed and whether any charges or restrictions would apply.

Ask what happens if the provider cannot arrange a funeral in your new location.

Worth checking: Some plans are tied to a specific funeral director or region. If you move, there may be additional charges or the plan may not transfer at all.

5. Which funeral directors can carry out the funeral?

Who carries out the funeral matters. Make sure you understand your choices before you sign.

Ask which funeral directors are available locally and whether you can choose or change the director.

If a funeral director sells or arranges the plan, check their FCA permissions or their status as an appointed representative of an authorised firm.

Worth checking: A funeral director acting as an appointed representative must still be listed on the FCA register. You can verify this using the **FCA Firm Checker**.

6. What are the cancellation terms?

Life changes. Understand what happens if you change your mind or fall into financial difficulty.

Check the cancellation period, any charges and how much you would receive back.

If paying by instalments, also ask what happens if you miss payments or die before completing them.

Get the answers in writing before committing.

Worth checking: Some plans retain a significant portion of payments made if you cancel. Always confirm the exact refund amount in writing before signing.

7. What happens if the funeral plan provider goes out of business?

Understanding your financial protection matters — particularly for plans paid in full upfront.

Eligible plans with FCA-authorised providers are protected by the Financial Services Compensation Scheme (FSCS).

If a provider fails, arrangements may be made for a replacement plan. If FSCS steps in, it can arrange replacement cover where possible or pay compensation based on the current cost of an equivalent plan, subject to its rules and limits.

Worth knowing: Read about FSCS funeral plan protection at fscs.org.uk to understand what is and is not covered before purchasing a plan.

Before you decide

Once you have chosen a plan and committed, make sure the right people know about it.

1. **Keep the plan documents somewhere your family can find them**

   Store the paperwork in a safe, accessible place and let a trusted person know where it is. Record the location inside your PodVault.

2. **Make sure someone you trust knows who the provider is**

   Ensure at least one person close to you knows the provider's name and how to contact them when the time comes.

3. **Check the individual plan's terms carefully**

   Every plan is different. Read the terms and conditions in full and seek advice if anything is unclear.

4. **Confirm FCA authorisation before making any payment**

   Use the FCA Firm Checker at fca.org.uk to verify the provider's status. This is the single most important step.

5. **Get all answers in writing**

   Do not rely on verbal assurances. Ask for written confirmation of everything that matters before you commit.

Where to find out more

These are the key official resources to help you check a provider and understand your protection.

The FCA Firm Checker

Use the Financial Conduct Authority's Firm Checker to confirm whether a provider is authorised to enter into funeral plan contracts and to administer existing plans. Check the permissions section carefully under "What this firm can do".

The Financial Services Compensation Scheme (FSCS)

The FSCS protects eligible funeral plans held with FCA-authorised providers. If a provider fails, the FSCS may arrange replacement cover or pay compensation based on the current cost of an equivalent plan, subject to its rules and limits.

Read about FSCS funeral plan protection at fscs.org.uk to understand the scope of the scheme before you buy.

The plan provider directly

Ask the provider for a full written breakdown of what is included, what is excluded, the cancellation terms and what happens to your money if the company ceases trading.

Need some help?

Contact our PodSupport team if you're unsure where to start.

A final thought

A prepaid funeral plan can provide genuine peace of mind — for you and for the people you care about. But only if it is the right plan from a provider you can trust.

Taking the time to ask these seven questions before committing can help you avoid unexpected costs, understand your protection and feel confident in your choice.

And if you are helping a parent or someone close to you think through their options, involve them in the process. The aim is to give them confidence and control, not to make decisions on their behalf.

Keep the plan documents somewhere your family can find them. Make sure someone you trust knows who the provider is and how to contact them.

This guide is provided for general information for UK consumers only. It is not financial advice and does not constitute a recommendation to purchase any specific funeral plan or product. Individual circumstances vary and the rules of the FCA, FSCS and funeral plan providers are subject to change. Check the individual plan's terms carefully and seek independent advice if anything is unclear.

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