

RISE OF THE CELEBRANTS

The demand for non-religious funerals is growing as families turn increasingly to secular organisations for ceremonies that are a celebration of life

WORDS: LINDA D JONES AND STEWART MCROBERT

Across the UK, bereaved families are increasingly turning to celebrants to conduct the funerals of their loved ones. It may be the secular nature of modern Britain that is the cause of this trend, and in most cases families receive a first-class service. However, anyone can set up as a celebrant regardless of expertise or experience. That can prompt concerns about issues such as insurance cover and what would happen if something went wrong.

Over the years, various trade associations for celebrants have grown. They set standards of operation for their members and now include insurance with their membership. It is probably wise to make sure any celebrant you use is a member of one of these bodies.

We gave several of the most well-known organisations a chance to tell us about themselves and put the spotlight on humanist celebrant Caroline Lambie.



Association of Independent Celebrants

"As Associate and Provider members of SAIF and the NAFD, the AOIC supports their joint aims to improve professionalism in the funeral industry and attend all national meetings and conferences of both

organisations, ensuring that their members receive any relevant information and updates.

"The AOIC does not train new celebrants, but concentrates on supporting, mentoring and helping members, and works with NOCN (previously the National Open College Network) training providers, recommending a training programme to ensure that training is to the highest level.

"The AOIC has led the way forward by providing professional indemnity insurance to all members, which other associations now include in their membership."

Phil Spicksley, President of the Association of Independent Celebrants
www.independentcelebrants.com



The County Celebrants Network

"The County Celebrant Network was set up to provide a service for people who appreciate help by a professional body in stressful times and for ceremonies where experience and expertise is needed.

"It is generally thought that because of wars and the millions who have lost their lives, religion suffered with many families turning their back on God and places of worship.

"Because of this, alternative non- or semi-religious services started to appear. The celebrant concept evolved