

# Funeral - Burial at Sea



## General Information

A licence may be obtained from the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA). There are, on average, less than 50 burials at sea a year\* (excluding naval burials), and only at approved locations

- Near Newhaven, Sussex
- The Needles Spoil Ground, to the west of the Isle of Wight
- In the Tynemouth off the Northumberland coast

DEFRA does not encourage burial at sea for obvious reasons, but to apply for a licence, visit this website: <https://www.gov.uk/burial-at-sea>

To avoid risks to the environment or distress to families DEFRA recommends the scattering of cremation ashes at sea, which can be undertaken without a Food & Environment Protection Act (FEPA) licence.

There are businesses and charities that provide the burial service, including The Maritime Volunteer Service - the Bexhill unit providing a small number of interments each year

In order to find out further general details about sea burial, rather than Naval, you will need to contact The Marine Consents Environmental Unit.

- - information sourced from The Natural Death Centre

## Burial at sea - Specific instruction

Burial at sea is recognised, not only within the sailing community, but, considering Great Britain's naval history, as a tradition that permeates all communities. This tradition however, has to be balanced against a number of concerns, including our obligation to protect the marine environment. So, having decided that you wish to arrange a burial at sea, you need to

- Register the death with the Registrar of Births, Deaths & Marriages
- Prepare the correct documentation
- Obtain a FEPA Licence for burial at sea
- Prepare the body
- Get the right coffin
- Organise the burial/ceremony

## Coffin Requirements for burial at sea

The government publishes full details on this here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/burial-at-sea-further-information>

## **Naval Burials**

The Navy conducts its own burials at sea, for those veterans who wished to be buried at sea. To organise this, or to find out more, you will need to contact the Base Chaplain, via the place from which the deceased served.