

**Menorah Synagogue
Cheshire Reform Congregation**

Cremation....

This leaflet offers practical guidance

To guide you should you choose cremation:

In recent years there appears to be an increasing trend in the Jewish community to choose cremation rather than burial.

In the event of a burial, the procedures with regard to traditional Jewish interment have been in place in Britain for many hundreds of years. The burial is conducted by a Rabbi as soon as possible following the death. With minimum delay there is minimum distress for the family.

Until now, there has been very little guidance available to mourners as to what steps need to be taken should they choose cremation. Therefore time lapses between cremation and interment of anything between several days and several years have occurred.

After a cremation, it is usually two to three days before the ashes are available from the crematorium for interment. Unlike a Jewish traditional burial, which usually occurs within twenty-four hours of death, an interment following cremation can not be held so quickly. Therefore, the likelihood is that the ashes may remain in the mourner's home or at the undertaker's office for some considerable time, which makes it extremely hard to achieve closure and to bring mourning to an end.

If the deceased is to be cremated, then in the first instance the synagogue office and the Rabbi need to be informed of the death and that cremation has been chosen (Guidance in leaflet "What to do when someone close to you dies" available from the synagogue office or the website www.menorah.org.uk).

A few days after a cremation, the crematorium will issue a Certificate of Cremation to the undertaker which is kept with the ashes.

At this point, the family should instruct the undertaker to put the ashes into the basic casket, as, according to Jewish tradition, ornate coffins or caskets are not used.

A metal plaque is attached to the casket bearing the name of the deceased and the dates of birth and death.

Arrangements need to be made with the Rabbi for a date and time for the ashes to be interred at Mill Lane cemetery. The waiting time between cremation and interment should be no more than two months. Appropriate storage of the casket of ashes can be arranged by the Chairman of the cemetery committee.

After a suitable interval (usually around 11 months) after the interment of the ashes, arrangements may be made with a stonemason for a head-stone (the Rabbi and the office will help you with the wording) and also with the Rabbi for an unveiling ceremony.

Further advice about any matter touched on in this leaflet can be obtained from the Rabbi, the synagogue office or the Chairman of the cemetery committee.