

## What to do with ashes

Perhaps the greatest advantage of cremation is the variety of commemoration possible for the cremated remains.

It is interesting that there are very few laws governing cremated remains and unlike some countries they may be scattered freely as long as the landowner's consent is obtained.

Generally, we advise the crematorium before the funeral in respect of the cremated remains. If necessary we will collect the remains from the crematorium, usually the working day after the cremation.

The final dispersal of the cremated remains may be a very simple decision for you; the deceased may have left instructions or there may be family history to guide you. For now, we will assume the decision is not so simple and discuss below some of the options open to you.

While there is no need to rush this decision, we feel it is very important to keep it firmly in mind. As the funeral passes, the decision may become increasingly difficult and as you come to terms with your bereavement, increasingly painful to bring back as a discussion with the family. If we are looking after the remains then periodically we will remind you that a decision is still to be made. We recommend setting a goal or date to aim at for a decision.

### At the crematorium

- **Gardens of Remembrance.** All crematoria have a garden of remembrance of some description (please see the further information in respect of a specific crematorium on our 'About Us/Crematorium' page.) Generally a Garden of Remembrance will offer a way to scatter cremated remains in proper and decent manner. This will satisfy families when they consider the act of cremation to be final and do not require a focal point for the future. Scattering in a Garden of Remembrance is often anonymous and rarely gives opportunity for direct commemoration. One must bear in mind that a crematorium is offering a facility to a very large number of families in a relatively small area.
- **Book of Remembrance** - This is often chosen as a memorial when the remains have been scattered in the Garden of Remembrance. Obviously, the book does not tie up tangibly with cremated remains.
- **Plaques etc** - Most crematoria offer ways to commemorate the deceased. This may be way of a plaque on a wall, a memorial shrub or tree or perhaps a plot where the remains are buried, (please see the further information in respect of a specific crematorium on our 'About Us/ Crematoria' page.) Families should consider carefully the 'term' for the memorial before making a decision, often such memorials have to be renewed after only a few years.

## Away from the crematorium

- In the early 1960s only 10% of cremated remains were removed from the crematorium, the others being scattered on site. By 2000 the number being removed had increased to over 50% and is still increasing today.
- Cremated remains may be scattered in a favourite place although you should have the landowner's permission. As examples, golf courses, at sea, the New Forest to name just a few.
- A memorial tree - Often families like the idea of having something that will live and grow to commemorate the deceased; it is as if to put something back into the environment. You may like to look at our page discussing 'Woodland Burial' under 'Services' or perhaps visit the Harbour View website at [www.harbourview.co.uk](http://www.harbourview.co.uk).
- A family grave - You may have a grave that is considered full for traditional burial. It is most likely that cremated remains could be buried into the grave as the amount of room a casket requires is minimal. Using an old family grave has the advantages of reunion and a clear possibility for commemoration.
- A new burial plot - Cemeteries and some churchyards offer small graves specifically for the burial of cremated remains. This facility offers the benefit of long-term commemoration and perhaps in time may be used by other members of the family when their time comes.
- Own garden - An obvious note of caution is that sooner or later the family will sell the property and control would be lost over the spot where the remains are buried/scattered.
- Keeping the remains at home - Families should be careful doing this; it is unfinished business and without a final aim can lead to problems over time.
- The abstract - Cremated remains can be made into jewellery, sent into space among other things; please ask us for details if required.