

## Burial or Cremation – Lastingpost.com

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### Introduction

You need to choose whether you want to be buried or cremated. Cremation is now chosen by more than 70% of people in the UK. As recently as 1940, only 9% of people were cremated. In fact, cremation was only made legal in 1884. However, the strong rise in the number of people choosing to be cremated has now levelled out. In recent years there has even been a slight move back to burials. There are several factors which may help you choose whether you would like to be buried or cremated.

### Reserving a Plot

There is a national shortage of burial space. Many cemeteries will run out of space within the next ten years. There are already parts of the country where space is no longer available or is limited to local residents. If you want to be buried it is important that you make appropriate provision. Unless you have a family grave, you will need to purchase a grave. This will give you the exclusive right of burial in a grave for a specified period of time, usually between ten and one hundred years.

You should be aware that the law stipulates that graves cannot be sold for more than one hundred years. The law does permit grant ownership to be extended and some local authorities will offer owners the opportunity to top up their lease every five years. Even if this option is not available, a family will be able to renew the right at the end of the current lease.

### Environmental Issues

In the past fifty years, people have been encouraged to choose cremation as a solution to overcrowding in churchyards and cemeteries. Cremation was heralded as being efficient and convenient. However, there is increasing concern that cremation is contributing to global warming with the emission of carbon dioxide and other harmful pollutants into the atmosphere. According to recent government figures, the fumes from vaporised dental filings make up 16% of mercury emissions.

The Government has recommended that graves are reused and if this happens, there may be strong shift back to burial as a natural and eco friendly solution.

In this regard, there has already considerable growth in alternative or green burials. Here, the burial takes place in a natural woodland setting. After a period of time, traditional trees are planted and the area returned to nature with wild flowers and animal life encouraged. There are estimated to be 2,000 green funerals each year and the number of natural burial grounds has increased from 52 in 1997 to 214 grounds today.

### Costs

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The cost for a cremation is in the range of £250 -£400.

The cost of a new grave varies considerable in different parts of the country but on average will be in the region of £1,200. A modern grave is designed to hold between one and four people so when used in the future, the cost incurred will be significantly lower as the family simply pays for the grave to be reopened.

**END**

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