

# Social Inclusion and Diversity

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## Key legislation and policy

<b>Legislation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <a href="#">Equality Act 2010</a></li></ul>
<b>National policy and guidance</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <a href="#">Planning Policy Wales 10 (PPW)</a></li><li>• <a href="#">Technical Advice Note (TAN) 11: Planning and Noise</a></li></ul>
<b>Judgments</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <i>AZ v SSCLG &amp; Gloucestershire DC</i> [2012] EWHC 3660 (Admin)</li></ul>
<b>Other guidance</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <a href="#">ISO 9613-2: 1996 Attenuation of sound during propagation outdoors</a></li><li>• WHO Guidelines for Community Noise 1999 (CNG)</li><li>• WHO Night-time Noise Guidelines for Europe 2009 (NNG)</li><li>• Environmental Noise Guidelines for the European Region 2018</li></ul>

## Other relevant Manual chapters

- a) Human Rights and the Public Sector Equality Duty

## Introduction

1. The purpose of this chapter is to provide brief guidance on cultural issues which might be encountered by Inspectors. It gives an introduction to the cultural background and history of the main racial groups Wales, outlines the legislative framework on discrimination and ethnic issues, establishes good practice for dealing with the involvement of ethnic and religious groups in the planning appeal system, advises how to deal with racism and racist representations and highlights the important role of the planning system in facilitating social interaction and creating healthy, inclusive communities.

## Ethnic Groups in Wales

2. Ethnic minorities constitute approximately 5%<sup>1</sup> of the total population of Wales. Whilst the number of visible minorities has increased over the past 50 years, Britain as a whole has a long history of playing host to ethnic minority communities.
3. Following World War II, Britain suffered a serious labour shortage and looked to the then Empire to help rebuild her economy. In Empire countries people looked towards the UK as an area of economic opportunity or as a way of escaping the disruption that followed the partition of India. In India and the West Indies, workers were actively recruited for work in the UK. Until 1962, immigration to the UK was unrestricted for Commonwealth citizens. Subsequently the controls on immigration have become successively more stringent.
4. The main ethnic minority groups in the UK are set out in **Appendix A**.

## Legislation

5. [The Equality Act](#) has streamlined all previous equality legislation, including the (now repealed) Race Relations Act 1976, into one Act.
6. The Equality Act 2010 provides a basic framework of protection against direct and indirect discrimination, harassment and victimization. The Act identifies two distinct types of discrimination, both of which are unlawful. Direct discrimination is where someone is treated less favourably than another because of a protected characteristic. Indirect discrimination consists of applying a requirement or condition, which although applied equally to all, would disproportionately put persons with a protected characteristic at a disadvantage.
7. The protected characteristics are:

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<sup>1</sup> <https://statswales.gov.wales/Catalogue/Equality-and-Diversity/Ethnicity/ethnicity-by-area-ethnicgroup>

- Age
  - Disability
  - Gender reassignment
  - Marriage and civil partnership
  - Pregnancy and maternity
  - Race
  - Religion or belief
  - Sex
  - Sexual orientation
8. The Act also introduced the Public Sector Equality Duty. As an Inspector you must comply with this duty. Further information can be found in the Human Rights and the Public Sector Equality Duty chapter.
  9. Section 19 of the Public Order Act 1986 prohibits the publication or distribution of any written material which is threatening, abusive or insulting and likely to stir up hatred against any racial group.
  10. In addition to domestic legislation Article 9 (the right to manifest one's religion or beliefs) and Article 14 (freedom from discrimination) of the [European Convention on Human Rights](#) provides further protection against discrimination. [The Human Rights Act 1998](#) incorporates the convention into UK law. See below for the significance of Article 10 (freedom of expression). Further information can be found in the Human Rights and the Public Sector Equality Duty chapter.
  11. The [Well-being of Future Generations \(Wales\) Act 2015](#) sets a framework to ensure the 'sustainable development principle' (meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs) is met. Section 4 of the Act puts in place a number of well-being goals, one of which is "*A more equal Wales – A society that enables people to fulfil their potential no matter what their background or circumstances (including socio economic background and circumstances).*"

### **Casework: general points**

12. Inspectors should be aware of equal opportunities issues and should be sensitive to the special needs of ethnic groups or individuals involved in appeals. Every effort should be made to ensure that the right names and terminology are used and that all parties attending an inquiry or hearing can follow the proceedings. Racist representations must be curbed.
13. Further information on naming systems is set out in **Appendix B**. Guidance relating to site visits, hearings and inquiries is available in the Human Rights and the Public Sector Equality Duty chapter.

### **Discrimination and Gypsies**

14. In Wales, Circular 005/2018 'Planning for Gypsy, Traveller and Show Peoples sites' defines gypsies and travellers as:

(a) Persons of a nomadic habit of life, whatever their race or origin, including –

(i) Persons who, on grounds only of their own or their family's or dependant's educational or health needs or old age, have ceased to travel temporarily or permanently, and

(ii) Members of an organised group of travelling show people or circus people (whether or not travelling together as such); and

(b) All other persons with a cultural tradition of nomadism or of living in a mobile home.

## **Terminology**

15. This is often one of the most misunderstood areas in race relations. Perceptions and terminology change and what was considered acceptable ten years ago may now be considered offensive. It is normally better for Inspectors to avoid making specific reference to any term of national origin or cultural identity, in inquiries, hearings, site visits or in letters and reports, unless these issues are of clear relevance to the case and it is absolutely necessary to make reference to them (see also above).

16. Should it be necessary to do so, Inspectors should make sure they use the correct terminology. A sensitive approach will be least likely to cause offence. At inquiries and hearings, careful questioning will help with clarification.

17. The definitions in the following paragraphs should be considered as pointers. The term coloured should be avoided. Whilst it was commonly used in the past it is generally disliked and thought to be offensive and patronising. Black has become widely accepted, especially with people from Caribbean and African communities. Whilst Asians may also refer to themselves as black it is generally inadvisable to use this term to describe them.

18. "Visible Minorities" is a possible term for people of Asian, Caribbean and African descent. The term Ethnic Minorities includes all visible and other minorities. 'Cultural Groups' is beginning to be used as it has no bias towards colour or country of origin. Using the term immigrants to describe members of ethnic communities is inaccurate and offensive.

19. The term West Indian, whilst not usually offensive, does not have any real meaning except in relation to Cricket, and may carry a colonial overtone. People whose cultural background is the Caribbean usually refer to themselves by their country of origin.

20. The term Afro-Caribbean is acceptable but is generally only used in official and academic documents. African is similarly acceptable for people with an African background but they would more usually refer to themselves in terms of their country of origin.

21. People born in Britain may or may not use these designations but will often refer to themselves simply as black or black British.
22. The term Asian or more precisely South Asian is acceptable to describe people whose cultural background is the Indian sub-continent, but this is a collective term and people are more likely to refer to themselves in terms of their national or religious origin. 'Oriental' should be avoided as it is inaccurate and considered racist.
23. The term half caste is offensive and should not be used. Mixed Race is widely used but even this may cause offence. The term Multi-Racial may be more appropriate depending on circumstances.
24. The terms British or English/Welsh should always be used in the most inclusive sense; it is not acceptable to use them to mean White.

### **Religious Beliefs**

25. Religion often forms a major part of community life for ethnic groups and may be important in maintaining cultural identity. Many members of ethnic groups follow either non-Christian religions or belong to a variety of different Christian churches and may have different patterns of worship. The need for specialised religious facilities often results in the need to obtain planning permission and may possibly result in appeal.
26. A summary of the major festivals and the basic beliefs of religious groups can be found at **Appendix D**.
27. Members of the same religion will come from different countries and regions and may not wish to share facilities with other co-religionists from other areas, for example where religious practices differ or where there has been a recent history of conflict.

### **The role of the planning system**

28. In Wales the Planning Policy Framework (Edition 10) recognises that the planning system can play an important role in facilitating social interaction and creating healthy, inclusive communities.

### **Issues and reasoning in Inspectors' decisions**

29. Where ethnic or cultural matters are involved, Inspectors should be careful with the wording of issues and reasoning. For example, the term 'character of the area' is usually quite acceptable when dealing with architecture and townscape, but in certain situations it can be imbued with ethnic or cultural overtones.
30. Where there are cultural sensitivities, it will be better for Inspectors to avoid such general terms and define issues specifically in terms of matters such as the

appearance of the area, noise, traffic, evening and weekend activity and car parking, policies to encourage or discourage particular kinds of land use and so on. Obviously no cultural or religious bias can influence the decision; issues should be framed, and reasoning followed, in such a way as to avoid any suggestion of partiality.

31. Inspectors should be aware of the decision of the European Commission on Human Rights [\*ISKCON v UK \(76ADR90\)\*](#). *ISKCON (International Society for Krishna Consciousness)* had appealed against an enforcement notice in respect of the change of use of a manor in the Green Belt. The frequent attraction of large numbers of worshippers had created problems of traffic and disturbance. The Commission supported the approach taken by the Inspector, who recognised ISKCON's freedom to manifest its religion but considered that this was outweighed by other considerations.

### **Conditions**

32. Care may be needed in applying the test of reasonableness as described in [WGC 016/2014: The Use of Planning Conditions for Development Management](#), particularly when dealing with cases concerning religious institutions.
33. For example, operating hours conditions on religious and other premises may be difficult to monitor or have the effect of making the intended use impossible. Tight restrictions on the hours in which a mosque may be visited, for example, may render it unusable because Muslim worship requires that the faithful pray before dawn, the time of which will vary during the year. Conditions that seek to maintain the "special character" of Sunday - such as opening hours conditions - may not be as relevant in predominantly non-Christian areas (although this will not always be the case).
34. Conditions restricting the opening of takeaways should not specifically mention the types of hot food that may be sold. Such conditions are unenforceable and may open up the decision to an accusation of racism.
35. Further advice on conditions can be found in [WGC 016/2014: The Use of Planning Conditions for Development Management](#).

## **Appendix A: Main Ethnic Minority Groups in the UK**

### **Afro-Caribbean**

The great majority of Afro-Caribbeans who emigrated to the UK did so before 1962. Most were originally from Jamaica, but there was also significant emigration from other islands such as Trinidad and Barbados and from mainland Guyana. Adult immigration since the 1970's has been very low and over half the 500,000 people of Caribbean origin in Britain were born here. They comprise 17% of the visible ethnic minority population and just under 1% of the population overall.

### **Indians**

Indians were the earliest South Asian group to settle in the UK in substantial numbers. Most Indians come from either the Gujerat or Punjab regions of India. Those from Gujerat would speak Gujerati as their main language whereas those from Punjab would speak Punjabi as well as understanding Hindi and Urdu.

Hinduism is the main religion of India and 50% of Indians in the UK are Hindu. Sikhs from the Punjab comprise 30% of the total in the UK and Muslims mainly from Gujerat comprise around 20%. Indians may also be Buddhists, Jains or Christians. There are approximately 840,000 people of Indian origin in the UK at the moment.

### **Indians from East Africa**

In addition to direct migration from India, migration from Indian communities in East Africa has also occurred particularly during the late 1960's or early 1970's. The religious beliefs of immigrants from East Africa mirror those who emigrate directly from the Indian subcontinent.

### **Pakistanis**

Pakistanis first settled in the UK during the 1950 and 1960's. Typically this first consisted of males with dependant females and children following later. Today there are approximately 475,000 people of Pakistani origin in Britain. Traditionally many of those who emigrated came from the region around the city of Mirpur in the north of the country. Most Pakistanis speak Urdu along with other local languages or dialects. Almost all Pakistanis are Muslim although there is a small Christian community. Pakistani Muslims form the largest element in the UK Muslim population.

### **Bangladeshis**

Bangladeshis have arrived more recently in the UK. They number around 160,000 and are still a young community with many school age children. Most Bangladeshi immigrants are from the district of Sylhet in the north-east of the country, which is economically poor and has a tradition of emigration. Most Bangladeshi immigrants will speak Sylheti, which has no written form. Bengali, the national

language of Bangladesh is also spoken particularly amongst younger Bangladeshis. Almost all Bangladeshis are Muslim.

### **Other Ethnic Communities**

The 4 immigrant groups above represent the largest visible immigrant groups in the UK. Other significant groups include communities of Black African origin, particularly from Nigeria and Ghana, ethnic Chinese mainly from Hong Kong, Singapore and Malaysia, Arabs from the Middle East and Vietnamese. In addition to distinct minorities there is also a significant number of people of mixed race. There are minorities that are not normally counted as visible but have a strong sense of community and a distinct identity such as Greek and Turkish Cypriots, Irish, Italians, Poles and Ukrainians.

## **Appendix B: Naming Systems**

Inspectors should avoid using the term Christian or first name but instead should use the term 'personal name'. Personal names do not always come first. For example, Chinese family names come first, such as Cheung Lan-Ying (Female) or Man Wen-Zhi (male).

Not everyone has a family name. For example, traditional Sikh's names do not include a family name, only the religious designation Singh for males and Kaur for females. The correct form of formal address is their full name; Mr Karamjit Singh or Mrs Jaswinder Kaur. However other Sikhs will use a different naming system depending on the factors mentioned above.

People with names that appear to be different may belong to the same family and females do not necessarily take their partner's family name on marriage. For example, male Muslim names from South Asia usually have a personal and religious element and sometimes an additional hereditary name. The position of personal and religious names are interchangeable and the hereditary name comes last e.g. Mohammed Rahman Khan.

However, females would usually take a personal name along with a second female or titular name, eg Yasmin Nesa. Females do not usually take a hereditary name or take any of their husband's names on marriage, but again this may vary. Religious names are often based on the names of the prophet or God, such as Mohammed or Allah. Calling a Muslim by his religious name alone can be offensive.

If in doubt, Inspectors should ask how the person would like to be addressed.

## Appendix C: Oaths

Planning Inquiries are brought under the enabling power of the [Tribunals and Inquiries Act 1992](#). While this provides the legal framework for the inquiry there is no power to force parties to give evidence under oath. If a party wishes not to give evidence under oath or to make an affirmation, they do not have to, but their evidence should be accorded less weight than evidence given under oath or affirmation.

The correct procedure for oaths and affirmations are given under the [1978 Oaths Act](#). Whilst the Act prescribes the procedure for a Christian or a Jew, it states that an oath shall be administered in "any lawful manner" for a person who is neither a Christian nor a Jew. For persons not willing to make an oath for religious or moral reasons a "solemn affirmation" can be made giving their evidence the same status as that taken under oath.

It is important that the correct procedure is followed for witnesses who are neither Christian nor Jewish. *R-v-Chapman (1980) Crim. LR 42* held that the validity of an oath depends upon it being taken in a way which is binding and intended to be binding on the conscience of the witness. Asking members of non-Christian religions to affirm when this could be considered to be not binding on their conscience, may leave a decision open to challenge. Whilst some Muslims may consider themselves bound by taking an oath on the Bible or Old Testament others will not and it is best to avoid this wherever possible.

If a witness wishes to take an oath in the manner that best ties their conscience, then they should be given this opportunity. It is often difficult to know before an inquiry if a witness belongs to a non-Christian religion. If an Inspector believes this may be the case and there is the likelihood that evidence will need to be taken under oath then they should liaise with the office.

### Holy Books

The appropriate Holy Books should be available for witnesses. The office do not keep copies of any Holy Books and consequently, if a witness has confirmed that they wish to be sworn according to their particular beliefs they should be asked to provide the appropriate Holy Books. If this is not possible the office will liaise with local religious institutions to provide an appropriate copy.

It is desirable to anticipate any potential problems and if necessary, Inspectors should ask the Procedure Team to liaise with the relevant parties on reading the file. If it is not possible to arrange this in advance, then Inspectors should ask the parties to indicate their requirements for swearing oaths at the start of the Inquiry. In the event that a particular Holy Book is not available and the witness cannot be heard at a different time, when one may have been acquired, then the Inspector should consider adjourning the Inquiry. Inspectors should not put witnesses under any pressure to take an oath on an inappropriate book or take an affirmation, but if the offer is made freely then it should be accepted.

Sikh, Hindu and Muslim witnesses may wish to wash their hands, feet or other parts of their body before taking the oath so that they can be clean before touching the relevant

Holy Book. Muslim women are regarded as unclean when menstruating or shortly after childbirth and will wish to affirm; this request should be granted. Hindu and Sikh witness may wish to remove their shoes before taking the oath. Jewish, Sikh and other witnesses may wish to cover their heads both for the oaths and for the rest of the proceedings. Hindu witnesses may wish to bow before the Gita before or after taking the oath. Certain orthodox Jews may not wish to take an oath and should be allowed to affirm.

Most Buddhists will wish to affirm, although some Tibetan Buddhists may wish to take an oath in the presence of a photograph of the Dalai Lama or Lama of the witness's practice, or by placing a religious book on their head. The precise forms of words used will vary and should be agreed by the Inspector and the witness before the oath is taken.

Whilst many Chinese are Buddhist, Christian or Muslim, other Chinese may wish to affirm. Some Chinese will consider this more binding if they sign a written copy of the affirmation after giving it verbally. A form of declaration involving breaking a saucer is outdated and is now only used in Triads' initiation ceremonies and so should be avoided.

Rastafarians whilst not strictly Christian hold the Bible in great reverence and may wish to take an oath on it. This should be permitted. Many Rastafarians wear a hat or beret (a "Tam") indoors and they should not be asked to remove this, when attending an Inquiry.

Affirmations are usually taken by Quakers and members of similar Christian groups, members of certain Jewish groups, most Buddhists and anyone whose conscience cannot be bound by an oath.

### **Forms of oath taken**

Hindu (Taken on the Gita) : *"I swear by the Gita that the evidence I give shall be the truth the whole truth and nothing but the truth."*

Jew (Taken on the Old Testament) or Christian (Taken on both Testaments or the New Testament alone): *"I swear by almighty God that the evidence I shall give will be the truth the whole truth and nothing but the truth."*

Muslim/follower of Islam (Taken on the Qur'an/Koran): *"I swear by Allah that the evidence I shall give will be the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth."*

Sikh (Taken on the Sunder Gutka): *"I swear by Waheguru that the evidence I shall give shall be the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth."*

(An alternative form of Sikh oath may be used - swear by the Guru Nanak that the evidence I shall give shall be the truth the whole truth and nothing but the truth.)

Affirmation: *"I do solemnly, sincerely and truly declare and affirm that the evidence I shall give shall be the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth."*

## Appendix D: Summary of Major Beliefs

### Introduction

This appendix gives a brief overview of the major religions that are practised by ethnic minorities in the UK. It will concentrate particularly on the basic ideology of the religion, the patterns of worship, restrictions on behaviour and any particular Holy Days. However, because of the extensive nature of the topic this is very much an overview and only gives a basic description of the religions.

### BUDDHISM

As well as having a strong following among a mix of British men and women, Buddhism is followed by people of Chinese, Tibetan, Vietnamese and Indian origin. There are about 130,000 Buddhists in Britain.

Buddhism began in the 6th Century BC in Northern India with the enlightenment of Prince **Siddhattha Gotama** when he became the **Buddha** (the enlightened one).

There are three main Buddhist traditions:

**Theravada** (Way of the Elders) which is the prominent form of Buddhism in Sri Lanka, Burma and Thailand.

**Mahayana** (The Great Way), prominent in Tibet, Mongolia, Nepal, China, Korea and Japan -**Zen** is the Japanese form of this branch of Buddhism.

**Vajrayana** adds tantric practices to **Mahayana** and is widespread amongst Tibetan buddhists.

All three forms of Buddhism refer to the same scripture known as **Tipitaka** in Pali and **Tripitaka** in Sanskrit, the languages of Buddhist teaching.

Buddhists commit themselves to three refuges of Buddhism, The Buddha, **Dhamma** (The teachings of the Buddha consisting of the four noble truths) and **Sangha**, The Buddhist Community.

Lay Buddhists live by the minimum of five precepts: to abstain from killing, taking that which is not given, sexual misconduct, false speech, and alcohol and drug abuse that impairs mindfulness. They will visit the Temple on observance days based on the lunar calendar.

Further precepts such as sexual abstinence and fasting are practised on observance days. Buddhist Monks and Nuns observe the Ten Precepts and further restrictions. Novices are known as Samaneras and Bhikkhus have a higher ordination. In some cultures temporary ordination as a monk is a common feature of a young man's life.

Observance days are on the full moon days and lay buddhists will wear simple white clothes when visiting the temple. The exact days vary between the branches of

Buddhism but celebrate similar themes, the birth enlightenment and passing of the Buddha as well as other important feasts. The Zen Calendar is fixed and celebrates the following dates:

15th February	The Buddha's Parinivana (Passing)
8th April	The Buddha's Birthday
3rd October	Bodhidharma's Day (the first Patriarch in China)
8th December	The Buddha's Enlightenment

## CHRISTIANITY

Most Inspectors will be familiar with the basic worship patterns and beliefs of Christians. Christianity is the predominant religion in the UK but in the past 50 years there has been a large growth in the following of churches and groups other than the main recognised Christian churches in the UK.

Whilst these Churches generally follow the familiar basic patterns of worship there may differences in frequency of worship or dates of holy days. For example, Seventh Day Adventists hold Saturday to be their Holy Day or Sabbath and certain Eastern Orthodox Churches still follow the Gregorian calendar in celebrating holy days such as Christmas.

## HINDUISM

Hinduism is one of the world's oldest religions. Its origins can be traced back around 5000 years. Hinduism is an extremely diverse religion and it incorporates a wide range of teaching, beliefs and worship. It is the main religion or has a significant following in India, Nepal, Mauritius, Trinidad, Guyana and Fiji. Over 400,000 Hindus live in Britain which is about 10 % of the Asian population. Most Hindus in the UK are from the Indian States of Gujerat or Punjab, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh or East African Gujeratis.

The important Hindu scriptures are the 4 **Vedas** (Veda means knowledge), the epics **Ramayana** and **Mahabharata**, the **Upanishads** which contain the basic Hindu Philosophy and are also part of the Vedas, the **Bhagahad Gita** ("Song of the Blessed Lord") or **Gita** which is also part of the Mahabharata and is considered as the essence of the Upanaishads and the **Puranas**, which contain many religious stories.

Because of the diverse nature of the religions it is difficult to generalise about the basic beliefs of Hindus. Essentially Hindus believe in a supreme being, **Brahman**, either in the form of an all pervading spirit or, for others, a supreme person. In this world the supreme is manifest in three features: **Brahma**, the creator, **Shiva** the destroyer and **Vishnu** the preserver, usually worshipped either in the forms of **Rama** or **Krishna**. For most Hindus in the UK these provide the focus of worship. Many gods and goddesses are worshipped on various occasions eg **Ganesha**, the elephant headed god, is the god of wisdom and success. These are only the various names of one god and represent his various functions and qualities. Hinduism is essentially monotheistic. Hindus believe in reincarnation and that all living things have an eternal soul (**atman**) which is reborn into all forms of life. Hinduism has a highly developed sense of social life with the

existence of four **varnas** (castes) plus the **harijans** ("untouchables") and other subordinate classes. **Jatis** (sometimes called subclasses) are based around occupational groups. The caste system is discouraged by the Indian government and Hindu leaders but it continues to operate albeit with a diminishing influence.

Most worship takes place in the home in a room or part of a room dedicated as a shrine. Temple worship takes place on important religious anniversaries or special occasions. The Hindu calendar is lunar and so festival dates will vary from year to year.

**Shiva Ratri** (February/March) is a festival dedicated to the lord **Shiva** and devotees spend the night at the temple chanting and singing.

**Holi** (March/April) is a festival in honour of **Prahlada** and also celebrates the spring harvest.

**Rama Navami** is a spring fast celebrating the birth of Lord **Rama**.

**Raksha Bandhan** (August) symbolises the mutual bonds between brothers and sisters.

**Janamashtami** (August/September) celebrates the birth of Lord Krishna.

**Dasshera** and **Navaratri** are celebrations of the Mother Goddess and the triumph of good over evil. **Navaratri** (nine nights) follows the new moon in the month of **Bradha**. **Dassherea** (Tenth Day also known as **Vijaya Dashami**) is the final day of festivities and is celebrated with exchange of presents and messages of goodwill.

**Diwali** shortly follows Dasshera in October/November. It is a festival of lights and is connected to the story of **Rama** and **Sita** from the **Ramayana**. In some parts of India it is the end of the Hindu Year. Homes are illuminated with lamps, friends visited, presents exchanged and new clothes worn. The day after **Diwali** is **Annakuta/Bestvarash** when new year temple offerings of sweets and foodstuffs are made.

## **ISLAM**

Islam (submission to the will of God) revived in Makka (Mecca) in the 7th century AD. According to Muslim belief, Islam is as old as humanity. Today there are two distinct groups of Muslims, **Sunni** Muslims are the main branch and comprise 85% of the world's Muslims, whilst **Shi'ite** Muslims are concentrated in Iran, Iraq, Pakistan, India, Yemen and East Africa. There are between 1.5 and 2 million Muslims in the UK from a wide range of countries of origin. Islam stresses the equality of believers, but in many towns mosques will have congregations drawn from certain regions or homelands.

The **Qur'an** (Recitation) is regarded as the revealed word of Allah. It contains 114 chapters and gives guidance to Muslims on all aspects of faith and should be followed to the letter. Muslims are required to perform an ablution before handling the Qur'an.

The **Qur'an** and the **Sunnah** (the conduct of the prophet **Mohammed**) constitute the two principal sources of the **Shari'a**, the Islamic Law which constitutes all aspects of human life.

It is obligatory for all Muslims to offer prayers five times a day (**Salat**) preferably in a mosque. However, Friday prayers must be performed in a congregation in a mosque and this is obligatory for all adult Muslims. Traditional mosques have a dome and a tower, the **minaret** where the **muezzin** would traditionally call the faithful to prayer. Muslims should attempt the **Hajj**, a Pilgrimage to **Mekka** once in their lives.

The Islamic Calendar is Lunar. Each Year has 12 Months of 29 or 30 days. The Muslim era begins with Mohammed's migrations under intense persecution from **Makka to Medina**. Muslims base their years on this date.

The first day of **Muharram** is the first day of the new year.

**Ramadan** is a month of fasting. During this month eating, drinking, smoking and sexual contact is forbidden for all adult Muslims between dawn and dusk.

**Eid al Fitr** is a one-day festival marking the end of **Ramadan**.

**Eid ul Adha** is a four-day festival on the tenth day of the month of **Zill Hajj** that marks the end of the **Hajj**.

**Ashurah** is on the tenth day of **Muharram** and has special significance for **Shi'as** as they commemorate the martyrdom of **Iman Husain**, the prophet **Mohammed's** grandson.

**Milhad al Nabin** is the Birthday of Mohammed. It has become customary to celebrate this on the twelfth day of the month of **Rabi'al Awal**.

**Lailat al Oadr** is a very sacred and special night for Muslims and occurs on the 27th night of Ramadan. It marks the event when the **Qur'an** was first revealed to the prophet **Mohammed** and Muslims generally spend the whole night in prayer.

The **Qur'an** forbids the eating of pork and pork products. All other meat must be ritually slaughtered to be considered **Halal**.

Alcohol or any food or drink containing alcohol is forbidden as well as all intoxicating drugs.

## **JUDAISM**

Jews have been in England for many centuries. They were expelled by Edward I in 1290 but were readmitted to England towards the end of the 17th Century. In the UK there are both **Sephardi and Ashkenazi communities**. **Sephardi** Jews originally came from Spain, Portugal and North African countries and have been present in the UK since the readmission. **Ashkenazi** Jews are of Central and East European origin and fled Russian pogroms and Nazi persecution in Germany.

There are several different groupings in the UK. Orthodox Jews believe the **Torah** was revealed word for word by God and accord this, and rabbinical interpretations, full authority in determining life law and religious practice. Progressive Jews believe the

**Torah** was inspired by God but regard it as open to challenge and revision. Conservative Jews maintain traditional religious practices whilst recognising the influence of history on the development of Judaism. There are approximately 300,000 Jews in the UK.

Belief in the **Torah** (the five books of Moses) is central to Judaism. The Torah has 613 commandments (**mitzvot**) dealing with questions concerning the religious and daily lives of Jews. The Sabbath (**Shabbat**) is central to Jewish life. **Shabbat** begins about an hour before dusk on Friday evening and ends at nightfall on Saturday night. **Shabbat** is a day of worship and rest with special Synagogue services with public readings of the **Torah**. Jews are forbidden from working on **Shabbat**. Different groups will interpret this in different ways.

In addition to the **Torah**, Jewish scriptures include the **Nevi'im** (the books of the prophets) and **Ketuvim** (writings such as Psalms). The **Talmulad** is an expansion of the **Mishnah** and is a summary of religious and Civil Law. These form the basis of the **Halacha** Jewish law through which the practice of Jewish Life is defined. A **Beth Din** is a court of law according to the **Halacha**.

Worship is **conducted both in the home and at the Synagogue. There are 3 daily services: Shacharit** (the morning service), **Mincha** (The afternoon service) and **Maarive** (the evening service). It is not necessary for a **Rabbi** to lead communal prayers.

A 19-year solar and lunar calendar is used to conduct the year. Each month has 29 or 30 days and a year is usually 354 days so there is no fixed date for festivals. The Jewish day goes from evening to evening. All festivals begin in the evening.

**Rosh Hashana** (September/October) is 2 days which begin the New Year and the 10 days of repentance culminating in **Yom Kippur** (The Day of Atonement). **Yom Kippur** is a fast day devoted to prayer and worship. No work may be done on **Rosh Hasana** or **Yom Kippur**.

**Sukkot** (Tabernacles) (September/October) 7 days commemorating the wandering of the Jews in the wilderness. Temporary structures are built onto the sides of houses and families must eat in them. **Sukkot** is followed by **Shemini Atzeret** and **Simcaht Torah** (The rejoicing of the law) celebrating the completion and recommencement of the annual cycle of readings from the **Torah**. No work may be done on the first 2 days or last 2 days of the festival.

**Pesach** (March/April) 8 days commemorating the exodus from Egypt. No leavened foods (**chametz**) are consumed, the home is thoroughly cleaned, dishes are changed and unleavened bread is eaten. The home ceremony centres around the **seder meal** on the first two nights of **Peasach**. No work is done on the first 2 days of **Peasach**.

**Shavuot** (Pentecost - May/June): 2 days commemorating the receiving of the **Torah** at Mount Sinai. No work is done on these days.

There are no or few restrictions on work during **Chanukah** (December), **Purim** (February/March) and **Tisha Be'Av** (July/August). These are considered as minor festivals.

Jews adhere to strict dietary rules - **Kashrut**. Animals, birds and fish are either **Kosher** (permitted) or **Trief** (forbidden).

## **SIKHISM**

Sikhism was founded in the 15th Century by **Guru Nanak**. **Sikhism** was further refined by **Guru Gobind Singh** in 1699 with the introduction of the **Amrit** (sacramental ceremony) and the purity of the **Panj Piyare** (five beloved ones). In India Sikhs form a small but strong religious group. There are about 20 million Sikhs worldwide, 75% of whom live in the Punjab. There are about 500,000 Sikhs in the UK at the moment and some 170 **Grudwaras** (Temples). In many towns there are different Grudwaras for congregations drawn from different Indian **Jatis** (sub castes). They accept the main Sikh Scripture, the **Guru Granth Sahib** but do not conform to all Sikh tenants.

Sikhs believe in one god whose divine name is constantly recalled and meditated upon, the ten spiritual masters (**Gurus**) and their teachings, the acceptance of the **Guru Granth Sahib** as a living **Guru**, the rejection of the caste system and the belief in the equality of men and women. Any practising Sikh, male or female may perform the ceremony at the **Gurdwara**.

Practising Sikhs wear the five K's at all times identifying the **Khalasa** the brotherhood of Sikhs. These are **Kesh** - Long uncut hair tied in a knot and kept tidy with a turban, **Kanga**- a wooden comb, **Kara** - a steel bangle worn on the right arm, **Kachha/Kachhehra** shorts/underpants and **Kirpan**, a sword now usually ceremonial.

The Sikh calendar is lunar and apart from **Vaisakhi**, (see below) (April 13) varies from year to year.

**Vaisakhi** (April 13) is the Sikh New year and commemorates the founding of the **Khalsa by Guru Gobind Singh**

The martyrdom of **Guru Arjan** is commemorated in June.

The first installation of the **Guru Granth Sahib** in Nanded by **Guru Gobind Singh**, 3 days before his death in 1707 is celebrated in August.

The birthday of **Guru Nanak** is celebrated over 3 days in October/November.

Other Sikh festivals include: The martyrdom of **Guru Tegh Bahadur** the 9th Guru is commemorated in November. The Birthday of **Guru Gobind Singh** the 10th Guru is celebrated in January/February. All major festivals are conducted over 3 days with readings the continuous reading of the **Guru Granth Sahib**.

Sikhs regard all days as equally Holy and Good. In the UK communal prayer takes place on Sundays at most **Gurdwaras**.