

Jewish genealogical records will be made public

Tens of thousands of Jewish genealogical records will be made public under initiatives by the Manchester Council of Synagogues and the city's Jewish genealogical society. People will be able to access the records over the internet through a pay-as-you-view facility.

The genealogical society has released 300 new digital records from the closed Prestwich cemetery.

It is hoped that these will be added to the council of synagogues' ongoing project to create a super-database. A five-year council of synagogues' project includes digitising the last of 28,000 ageing records from burial societies and creating a website to host the data. The £50,000 cost has come from the city's burial societies and synagogue funds. It is hoped to recoup outlay from paid inquiries.

The council is also considering whether to join forces with the genealogical society and Manchester Jewish Museum to input combined records on to the museum's website.

Council of synagogues' chairman Shimmy Lopian said a joint venture had not yet been agreed. "I think pooling resources would be a positive thing, and we may join together in the future."

Genealogical society chair Lorna Kay is frustrated that the records are not being made public immediately. "I have a huge backlog of genealogical inquiries from the US, Israel, Australia, and New Zealand. We're turning down money as we speak."

The genealogical society has moved to premises at the Jewish Museum, where its records will be kept

From The Jewish Chronicle

November 06, 2008