

## Type of Burial – Lastingpost.com

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### Introduction

If you decided that you want to be buried then you will need to decide on the type of burial.

### In a Graveyard

A person living in a parish has the right to be buried in the parish churchyard provided there is room. Otherwise, there may be an adjoining burial ground. There is no right to be buried in a specific part of a churchyard or burial ground.

The increasing problem is the lack of available space. If you want to be buried in a churchyard you should check with the priest or minister as to the availability and also your right to be buried there.

### In a Cemetery

Cemeteries are usually owned by local authorities but an increasing number are owned by private companies. Although cemeteries are usually non denominational, they will usually contain reserved areas dedicated to specified religions.

Anyone living in a local authority area has the right to be buried in the authority's cemetery. People living outside the area may be allowed but on payment of a higher burial fee. As a starting point, you should check with your local authority.

### Natural Burials

Natural (or Green) burials which include both woodland and nature reserve burials are becoming increasingly popular. They offer an environmentally friendly, cost effective alternative to traditional burials. In 1996 there were seventeen Green burial grounds. There are now two hundred grounds with considerably more planned. Local authorities run half of them with others privately owned and run as businesses.

Usually, the body is returned to nature in a simple shroud or a biodegradable coffin made of willow, wicker or cardboard. The burial itself can either be religious or secular, formal or informal.

Some people who want a woodland burial request to be buried in an established wood but most choose an ordinary field where a broadleaf tree can be planted on or near the grave in commemoration. Over a period of time, the burial ground eventually grows into mature natural woodland.

Others want a nature reserve burial where they are buried in a wild flower meadow or natural pasture land. Graves are either unmarked or marked by wooden plaques that will eventually rot away.

In either case, the burial ground becomes a haven of peace and tranquillity. An uplifting living memorial where family and friends can visit for reflection and remembrance.

If you are considering a woodland or nature reserve burial, it is important that you choose a reputable provider. You must ensure that there is a deed or trust protecting the burial area from exploitation or development in the future. The majority of woodland burial grounds are Members of the Confederation of Burial Authority (CBA) and members of the Institute of Burial and Cremation Administration (IBCA).

## **Burial at Home**

If you own the freehold to your property, planning permission is not required for a burial at home. However, you should consult the local planning office and the environmental health department.

A check must be made on the level of the water table and the position of underground mains supplies. You should however be aware that a burial at home can have a detrimental effect on the value of the house. There can also be problems if the family decides to subsequently move.

## **Burial at Sea**

About twenty burials take place at sea each year. There are now only two places where sea burials are permitted: Newhaven, Sussex and the Needles Spoil Ground, off the west point of the Isle of Wight. When you register the death, you will need to tell the Registrar that you are planning a sea burial and obtain a Coroner's Out of England Form. A licence which is free will also be needed from the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food.

## **Useful links**

The Natural Death Centre  
[www.naturaldeath.org.uk](http://www.naturaldeath.org.uk)

British Humanist Association  
[www.humanism.org.uk](http://www.humanism.org.uk)

## **END**

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