



Heathfield and Waldron Parish Council
73 High Street, Heathfield, East Sussex, TN21 8HU
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Rules and Regulations for Theobalds Green Woodland Burial Ground at Theobalds Green, Heathfield TN21 8BT

The Woodland Burial area is managed for the benefit of wildlife and will therefore not resemble a traditional cemetery. The area for Woodland Burials will not be mowed in the manner that the rest of the burial ground is and maintenance will be appropriate to the needs of the trees, shrubs and flowers as they develop. Horticultural chemicals will only be used in exceptional circumstances – for example to spot treat noxious weeds.

As a natural environment is being provided in order to encourage wildlife to thrive, memorials will not be permitted in this area. The flora and fauna will be a living memorial for everyone to enjoy.

The Parish Council also operates a traditional burial ground at Theobalds Green which may be more suited to you if you prefer a more traditional burial ground with a memorial headstone. If you are unsure and wish to discuss the options further, please contact the office on 01435 865700.

Rules of the Natural Burial Area

1. Reservations are accepted from both Parishioner and Non-Parishioners for which application forms are available. Please note that the actual plots will only be allocated at the time of need to ensure that damage is not caused to maturing trees when the plot is dug. The eligibility for parishioner rates for those now living outside the parish will be 5 years.
2. **Burial Fees** – these are reviewed annually and any increases will be introduced on 1st January.
3. **Gravedigger Fees** – these are included in the fees charged by the Parish Council.
4. **All graves** will be excavated to a **single depth – at present (2020)** there will only be one burial allowed in plot (excluding interred ashes).

GRAVES may be affected by burial in adjoining plots. On occasions a family grave may be covered by a board in order that soil from a newly excavated grave can be collected. This will be removed as soon as the burial has taken place.

When the grave is re-opened for the purpose of making another burial therein – no person shall disturb any human remains therein or remove from there any soil which is offensive.

5. An **Exclusive Right of Burial (EROB)** will be issued after the first interment to the grave owner.

Any transfer of ownership of the EROB will be subject to the production of satisfactory evidence of title and the approval of the Council. Such transfer must be registered in the records of the Council and may be subject to a transfer fee.

Any change of address of the EORB owner must be conveyed to the Parish Council in order that up to date records are maintained and so that the grave owners can be contacted as and when required. No responsibility can be accepted for information which does not reach a grave owner if the Parish Council has not been informed about a change of address.

6. At an appropriate time after each funeral, when soil settlement has taken place and the grave has been levelled, the grave will be seeded with grass and wild flower seeds at the appropriate time of year. Note: the settlement of the grave may take six months.
7. The adjacent trees and shrubs are the living memorials and no other forms of memorial will be allowed. Whilst flowers and other tributes are permitted at the time of interment, in order to preserve the natural environment, please ensure these are removed after two weeks.
8. Only biodegradable coffins may be used, a list of permitted materials is available from the Parish Council.
9. Cremated remains will be allowed in woodland burial plots providing caskets are of natural materials – a list of permitted materials is available.
10. As stated in the introduction, the Woodland Burial area will not be maintained in the same way as the traditional burial ground. Graves must not be interfered with by cutting or mowing by anyone other than authorised personnel. During the course of its 'return to nature' the area will appear to be overgrown and unkempt and this is the intention.
11. The burial ground will be open daily from 0800 to 2000.
12. The Woodland Burial Ground is available to all faiths, religions or beliefs. The land is not consecrated but individual graves may be blessed if desired.
13. Because this is a green site we request that the deceased are not embalmed, sometimes called "hygienic treatment". Please make this clear to your funeral director. An exception would be consideration for cases of repatriation or if deemed necessary for medical reasons.
14. All coffins must be chosen from the range of approved environmentally friendly materials as per the list provided by the Parish Council. Cremated remains must be interred in biodegradable caskets or boxes. All coffins and caskets must have appropriate identification. The nameplate (not made of metal or plastic) is required on every coffin and casket and the wording should match the Registrar's green burial/cremation certificate. The plastic urn provided by most crematoria is not biodegradable and therefore cannot be interred.
15. No artificial flowers or similar to be left, again to preserve the natural appearance of the area. No items are to be placed on graves or hung on trees, including flower pots, wind chimes, wooden crosses, pebbles, garden ornaments, ribbons, flower containers, photos or soft toys. Any that are left will be removed. Please consider the planting of appropriate wild flowers in memory of your loved one as cut flowers are only permitted at the time of interment and will be removed after two weeks. Wreaths at Christmas may be placed on the grave plot and these will be removed

by the Burial Authority by the first week of February. These conditions must be adhered to as families have chosen the woodland burial ground for its natural beauty.

16. Every plot owner will be allowed to plant approved bulbs and wildflowers on their specific area with prior approval from the Parish Council.
17. The Cart Barn building is available as a gathering place for your use. The Cart Barn is open sided and does not hold any seating. Unfortunately, there are no facilities for refreshments. A toilet is situated inside the barn to which there is wheelchair access. Please could all users of the barn ensure that it is left clean and tidy after use.
18. Cremated remains may only be strewn in the designated place.
19. Only human remains may be interred at the Site. The burial of pets and other animals is not permitted. The scattering of pets' ashes is not permitted.
20. Trees which have been planted in the Woodland Burial Ground will be purchased and maintained by the Parish Council.
21. Heathfield and Waldron Parish Council will remove anything found onsite without its permission and which is deemed to be inappropriate to the ethos and aims of a woodland burial ground
22. All visitors must keep to the paths and tracks in order to avoid damaging the natural and emerging ground cover. All vehicles must be parked in the car park but are left at the owner's risk.
23. With the exception of Guide dogs - **no dogs** are allowed in the burial areas.
24. PAYMENT – the preferred method of payment for plots in the Woodland Burial Ground is by BACS. Please contact the office on **01435 865700** for details. If you wish to pay by cheque, payment should be made to Heathfield and Waldron Parish Council. In either case, payment must be cleared before the interment takes place.

PLEASE NOTE THE BURIAL GROUND MAY BE SLIPPERY OR MUDDY AND APPROPRIATE FOOTWEAR SHOULD BE WORN.

Please confirm your acceptance of the above rules and regulations by signing and returning a copy to

Heathfield and Waldron Parish Council, 73 High Street, Heathfield, East Sussex TN21 8HU

Plot No:

Name:

Signature:

Date: