

## WHAT IS A NATURAL BURIAL GROUND?



Gloucester City Council is aware of general concern at the depletion of natural habitats for plants and animals and is therefore committed to establishing and maintaining areas within the City that are of benefit to the environment.

To this end the City has developed part of the New Millennium Cemetery as a permanent protected habitat for wildlife.

We hope to encourage an increase in numbers of plants, insects and birds whilst providing an alternative, more natural form of burial ground for those that desire it.

This new development will provide families with an additional option to cremation or traditional burial and headstone. It will especially appeal to those who enjoy nature and appreciate knowing that they are helping to create a natural woodland to encourage the preservation of wildlife.

### **GRAVES**

Graves are prepared to a single depth with adjoining plots for those wishing to be buried along side other loved ones. A deed of ownership is granted initially for a period of 50, 75 or 99 years after which ownership rights revert to the City Council. The grave will be carefully recorded on a plan maintained by the Council so that the precise location of the burial can always be identified when the woodland has developed.

### **SITE MANAGEMENT**

The concept is that an area is set aside for burial purposes and left largely in its natural condition. The grass will only be cut one or two times during the year and the site will be managed with the aim of promoting wildlife. Wild flowers will be encouraged by an appropriate management regime and over sowing with locally sourced wildflower seed.

Headstones and other memorials are not permitted once any wreaths and cut flowers have been removed within a week or so of the burial.

### **TYPES OF COFFINS**

Only bio-degradable coffins will be permitted. There are now lots to choose from including willow wicker, cardboard and papier-mâché. Solid wood coffins are acceptable, however they must be from a sustainably managed source. We can provide contacts for all of these products. Plastic and metal urns are unacceptable.

### **MEMORIALS AND TRIBUTES**

A variety of trees have been planted in the woodland section, however it is not possible to plant individual trees on the graves.

It is important to understand that for the woodland to develop in a healthy way there may be a need for some thinning of trees probably after about thirty years. It is also inevitable that a few trees will die naturally but will be replaced by the City Council.

Plastic wrappings and containers will not be allowed. Also glass and stone vases would be most hazardous during mowing operations. Any that are placed there would be removed and disposed of.

### **CONCLUSION**

In choosing a woodland burial, loved ones will be commemorated by a unique living memorial. This will bring significant long term environmental benefits to the Community as a wood will be created providing a natural habitat for wildlife and an amenity for people to enjoy for many years.

If you are wanting to make advance arrangements for yourself, or if you have recently become responsible for someone else's funeral arrangements and would like to know more then please contact the crematorium staff on 01452 396902 between 9.00am and 4.30pm (Monday to Friday) Email: [heretohelp@gloucester.gov.uk](mailto:heretohelp@gloucester.gov.uk)