



BRISTOL
**MEMORIAL
WOODLAND**
TRUST



A guide to funeral planning



Please complete this form (PDF can be filled out using your computer / tablet) and either print for your records or save the PDF to your device. It is for your own use. Please do not send this form to Memorial Woodlands.

Please note you will need to view this pdf with a pdf viewer such as Adobe Acrobat Reader, this can be downloaded for free from the Adobe Website.

Bristol Memorial Woodland Trust is a registered charity (number 1082094). Set up in 2000 with the aim of creating and preserving woodland areas for public benefit. The vision being that these woodland areas, in turn, become wildlife reserves and that is already happening.

At present, the Trust holds or manages 100 acres of land in South Gloucestershire that is being transformed into public parkland, open to all and protected for the pleasure and benefit of future generations. The site will evolve into a mixture of woodland, glades and wildflower meadow. Study groups and seminars are encouraged. School parties and respite groups are welcome.

At its heart is a chapel and reception buildings, within a closed garden. These were originally a collection of Georgian Tannery buildings. They have become a regional centre for funerals and wakes where families are given time to say an unhurried farewell, in complete privacy, to their loved ones.

Memorial Woodlands has recognised that interment at burial is far better for the environment than cremation. Burial plots here provide a tranquil resting place, with trees planted nearby as a memorial, where families may gather in nature to reflect, to remember and celebrate the lives of their loved ones. Burials at Memorial Woodlands are helping to create this woodland, creating reserves for nature and helping the environment where before there existed only the monoculture of a dairy farm.

The planting of a commemorative tree is an ancient tradition. It is a symbol of continued life, strength and family connection. It gives relatives and friends a memorial to visit which they can enjoy watching as it changes over the seasons and years.

The Trust owns the topsoil of the site to a depth of one metre. This enables the Trust to manage and control the evolution of the site into the nature reserve intended. A place of public benefit, for both pleasure and education.

Bristol Memorial Woodland Trust owns all the trees and shrubs on the site and is solely responsible for planting and maintenance. Families may plant woodland and meadow bulbs and flowers to enhance the woodland further.

Introduction

Planning your own funeral is a task that is easy to put off until it is too late. However it is a generous act to whoever has the responsibility of carrying it out. It is also true that the worst time to plan a funeral is when someone has died. Shock and grief do not help in making decisions that may be regretted later. If possible, it is helpful for all those directly involved to talk together about what is wanted and although this can be difficult it may prevent much unhappiness and ill-feeling later on. Many people have found it an opportunity to take stock and say how they felt that a weight had been lifted.

There is no right or wrong way to hold a funeral. What is important is that those concerned leave feeling that they have said their farewells and given thanks in a way that is right and meaningful.

Funeral wishes, whether in a Will or as described below, are not legally binding after death. It is, therefore, sensible to identify who you appoint to give instructions for your funeral. In that way you can feel confident that your wishes will be followed. If you have a partner, to whom you are not married, and they are not appointed your executor, consider their needs carefully. It is not unusual for parents to take control when a unmarried person dies, and the partners wishes ignored. It is also helpful, and often therapeutic, if your partner, family and friends can follow your wishes after your death. Meeting your wishes is part of the grieving process for them, and forms part of their separation from your life. It is also a process in which you can consider their needs and perhaps integrate them into the funeral in some way. Having his or her name mentioned at the service might help. Perhaps someone might like to be a bearer or read a eulogy at the service. Once these opportunities have passed, they can never be recovered.

This document enables you to ask pertinent questions about the kind of funeral you want, and ensures that you have some control over the arrangements. There is nothing worse than seeking answers to these questions at the 'crisis' time of a death.

You will be able to price various options. Costs will arise in two areas. The first is 'disbursements'; the sums you will pay to doctors (for cremation), the cemetery or crematorium and the minister. The second area is the 'funeral' arrangements made by the funeral director, assuming you are using one. These include the cost of collecting and handling the body, the coffin, viewing, the hearse and cars, and all the professional arrangements.

If you are using a funeral director, obtain some quotes as soon as you have decided what you require. In general, the more you use the funeral director or the more complex the funeral, the more expensive it will become.

Keep this document with your Will, or somewhere known to the person arranging your funeral. This point is important! It is not unusual to have the wrong type of funeral because the Will, which contained funeral directions, was not read until after the funeral.

You can amend this form however you wish, and add pages if you need to. Delete sections that do not apply. The form can be photocopied.



Details for the funeral of:

Full Name _____

Address _____

_____ **Postcode** _____

Preliminary details

1) I have/have not written a Will - location of Will _____

If there is a Will, please treat this document as expanding on the wishes expressed in that Will, with the Will taking legal precedent if relevant.

2) My next of kin is: _____

Address _____

_____ Postcode _____

Tel No _____

Email _____

3) If different from the above, the person arranging the funeral will be:

Name _____

Address _____

_____ Postcode _____

Tel No. _____

Email _____

If you have a Will, and this person is not the executor, then any executor must agree to the arrangements in this document.

4) Do you wish to donate your body to medical science? **YES NO**

If YES, this must be arranged in advance.

5) Have you completed a 'Living Will' **YES NO**

This document directs your doctors over recovery from serious illness. If you answer YES, a copy should have been lodged with your GP, and you should state the location of the will when asked at the end of this directive.

Are you using a Funeral Director

- 6) Is the person arranging your funeral going to use a funeral director? **YES NO**
If YES, and you have a particular funeral director in mind, enter their name below

If you do not enter a name, it will be assumed you will leave the choice to the person arranging the funeral. Information on using a funeral director (from the Charter for the Bereaved) is available.

- 7) Do you have a prepaid Funeral Plan? **YES NO**
If YES, and a nominated funeral director must direct the funeral, enter their name

Funeral Plans vary in what they include. Please ensure that the Plan covers the costs of what you include in this directive.

Funeral details

- 8) Is it your wish to die at home? **YES NO**
If YES, do you want to have your body retained at home until the funeral, if this is possible? **YES NO**

- 9) If you should die in hospital/nursing home, do you want your body to be returned home prior to the funeral? **YES NO**
If YES, indicate how long for:

-
- 10) In most situations, nurses lay out the body at the time of death. Where it is possible, would you prefer someone else to do this, or perhaps assist? If yes, give name and contact details:

-
- 11) Do you wish your body to be embalmed? **YES NO**
If you choose woodland burial, embalming is not preferred, as the formaldehyde used is not environmentally friendly. Embalming is often called 'cosmetic' or 'hygienic' treatment by the funeral profession, and a charge is made for the service. It is not an essential process prior to burial or cremation.

- 12) Do you wish for your body to be viewed? **YES NO**
This is usually arranged by funeral directors using their chapel of rest (or repose). Most bodies are viewed in the coffin, although other settings can be arranged. A fee may be charged for viewing at agreed times and costs may be higher if more than one viewing is arranged.

Funeral details Cont.

- 13) If you answered YES to viewing, are you content that anybody who wishes to do so may view your body? YES NO

If you circled NO, list here who should not be permitted or state that you will attach a list of those people to this document.

- 14) What type of coffin do you require? **STANDARD/PURE WOOD/GREEN/OTHER**

Standard coffins from funeral directors are made of veneered chipboard with plastic handles and lining, with costs typically from £300.00*. **Pure wood coffins** and 'caskets' are available from funeral directors but can cost in excess of £800.00*. **'Green' coffins** made of cardboard, pure wood, wicker and bamboo are available from around £500.00*, as well as a wool shroud (burial only). Check for availability and prices before you decide, as some funeral directors may not use and/or supply green coffins. (*Prices as sourced May 2019).

Other types - if you require an unusual, or artist painted coffin, details of the supplier, design and size must be discussed. You can make your own coffin, should you prefer. The Natural Death Centre in London offers advice on coffin construction, green funerals, etc.

- 15) There is no need to have a funeral cortège with a hearse and following limousines.

At Memorial Woodlands the coffin can be in the chapel, in state, before the service, and the family arrive in their own vehicles.

Do you wish for a cortège? YES NO

Would you like your coffin to be in state, in the chapel before the mourners arrive? YES NO

You may prefer:

A hearse A bier An estate car Horse drawn hearse

A motorbike and side-car Other (please describe) _____

- 16) Do you want following limousines for the immediate family? YES NO

Traditional funerals have at least one limousine, often more. A charge may apply for each car.

Mourners may wish to use their own transport.

- 17) **Bearers** - would you prefer family bearers? YES NO Or close friends YES NO

Four are required to 16 stone in weight, and six above that.

Or bearers provided by a funeral director? YES NO

A charge will apply for bearers.

- 18) **Flowers** - do you want to leave the choice of flowers to the mourners? YES NO

Or Would you prefer family flowers only? YES NO

Or no flowers? YES NO

Some people see flowers as a wasteful and may prefer donations. Others elect to provide flowers from their own garden. Most wreaths are use plastic frames, oasis or plastic wrapping. Do you have concerns about biodegradability?

Funeral details Cont.

19) Donations - would you like donations at your funeral? **YES NO**

If you elect to ask for donations you may wish to elect a particular hospice or charity, as the beneficiary. This can be an important source of funds to these organisations. Such intended donations must be announced. You can propose that donations be sent by post, or a collection can be taken at the funeral service. Your funeral director will be pleased to offer you guidance.

You may wish to consider the charitable trust at Memorial Woodlands: Bristol Memorial Woodlands Trust (Charity no: 1082094).

20) Announcements

Do you want an announcement made in a local publication? **YES NO**

If YES, which publication(s)? _____

And: How many entries? _____

21) Do you have any special requests? **YES NO**

If YES, please describe: _____

This might include a letter or photo to be placed in coffin, a special route for the hearse etc.

The Funeral Service

22) Would you like a funeral service? **YES NO**

A service is not a legal requirement and your body can simply be taken directly to the crematorium or cemetery without ceremony. If you chose NO, and have a partner or family, please ensure they agree. It can be difficult for the bereaved to grieve properly where no service is held.

23) If you chose NO, briefly describe how your body will be delivered to the cemetery or crematorium.

24) If you chose YES to a service, complete either part (A) or part (B) below:

The service is divided into two parts, the 'main service' which can be held in a crematorium chapel, any church or chapel, a mosque, synagogue, at a funeral directors or any place you have permission to use, and the 'committal' (about 4 - 5 minutes). These are combined if all the service is held at the crematorium. For burial, the 'committal' occurs when you get to the graveside.

Cremation (A)

Where will the main service be held? _____

Burial (B)

Do you want the entire service at the graveside? **YES NO**

The Funeral Service Cont.

OR would you like the main service in the chapel at Memorial Woodlands (Fee applies) and the committal at the graveside? **YES NO**

OR the main service at: _____ followed by the committal at the graveside?

Format of the Service

25) Is it important that the service should be conventional? **YES NO**

26) What religion/spiritual belief/philosophy would you like the service be based upon?

_____ **27)** Do you have a minister, humanist officiant or person in mind to take the service? **YES NO**

If YES, please give the name _____

This can be a friend or relative. Memorial Woodlands will be able to introduce the person organising your funeral to an appropriate celebrant; whether a minister, humanist or other. If you answered NO, it is assumed you will leave the choice to the person arranging the funeral.

28) What format would you like the service to follow? _____

Most religious services follow a set format. Ministers differ in how much secular content such as music, readings or poetry they will permit. Secular (non-religious) services are crafted entirely at your prerogative.

If you have any preferred wishes, enter them here:

Music entering: _____

Music leaving: _____

Hymns: _____

Any tapes, CD's during service: _____

Any text or poems: _____

Please ensure that the music is available and known to whoever is making arrangements. If you are using the organ, ensure that your requests can be played - most classical music cannot.

Any other details: _____

This might include: not closing the committal curtains at the crematorium, using flowers to decorate the chapel, a choice of items to be placed in the coffin (no glass and dangerous items if cremation is chosen), items to be placed on the coffin, photographs to be displayed in the chapel and any form of symbolism or ritual you might prefer. At Memorial Woodlands families often elect to create a table of remembrance at the reception rooms.

Format of the Service Cont.

- 29)** Do you want an address (eulogy) at the service about your life? **YES NO**
 If YES, is the text enclosed? **YES NO**
 If NO, who will compose the eulogy?
 Is there somebody you would prefer to deliver the eulogy at the service? **YES NO**
 If YES, give their name: _____
- 30)** Is the service open to all? **YES NO**
 If NO, please state who is not to attend: _____
You should be aware that such decisions may be difficult for the bereaved to enforce.
- 31)** Are there any particular person(s) you wish to be invited to the service that might otherwise be omitted? **YES NO**
 If YES, say who and how they may be contacted: _____

After Cremation

- 32)** After cremation, where would you like your cremated remains placing?

Cremated remains pose no threat to the environment and can be strewn in fresh or saltwater. If strewn on the land, perhaps at a favourite spot, the permission of the landowner is theoretically necessary but rarely obtained.
- 33)** If an urn or casket is required, do you have a particular style in mind? **YES NO**
 If YES, what type? _____
If the cremated remains are taken away for scattering, a low cost cardboard container is often used. Some people dislike these containers! Bamboo or wooden caskets are the norm for burial. You need to be aware that some churches will not permit the burial of containers. Bamboo, stone, ceramic, bronze, silver and even golden urns can be purchased for keeping cremated remains at home or in storage.
- 34)** Do you require any form of memorial after cremation? **YES NO**
 If YES, please state type: _____

Burial details

35) Which cemetery do you wish to be interred in? _____
If you are using a new grave, state type: _____

36) If more than one, how many burials will occur in the grave? **ONE/TWO/OTHER**
Please name the other burials, if you can: _____

37) If it is to be a new grave, who will be the owner? _____

Making a child (over 18) or other survivor the grave owner will avoid the need to change the ownership after your death. If you have a partner, have the grave deeds in both names to ensure that you are both buried together.

If you are being buried in an existing grave, state which cemetery:

State the plot/grave number: _____

Where are the plot/grave deeds located? _____

Is it a plot 'reserved' in advance (with no burials)? **YES NO**

If NO, give details of the last burial: _____

Date: _____ Name: _____

38) Do you have a specific memorial in mind? **YES NO**

If YES, please give details of the memorial: _____

Please ensure that your preferred memorial is permitted on this grave.

Have you a preferred mason to supply and fix the memorial? **YES NO**

(Please note that at Memorial Woodlands we have our own masons and only they may supply a memorial to be placed at our cemetery.)

If YES, please state who: _____

Have you chosen the content and format of the inscription? **YES NO**

If YES, is a copy enclosed with this document. If NO, it will be assumed you will leave this decision to the person who arranges the funeral.

Subsequent Memorial Service

39) Do you require a memorial service after your death? **YES NO**

This could be in church, or some sort of gathering, perhaps when the cremated remains are placed, or a tree planted.

If YES, please give details (or state where located):

Commemoration

40) If you require a form of commemoration after your death, please give details:

This may include a donation to the hospice or charity, endowment, gift to parish or church the planting of a tree or placing of a seat. If the information is given in your Will or is confidential, there is no need to give details here.

Last Wishes

41) Are there any last wishes or words unsaid you wish to say now? **YES NO**

If YES, please state where they can be found:

42) Have you left any letters, instructions, etc. for reading after your death? **YES NO**

If YES, please state where they can be found: _____

And to whom they are addressed: _____

Signed: _____ Date: _____

Full name: _____

Address: _____

_____ Post Code: _____



Completing Your Estate

The following items will be required by the executor or your family to complete your estate. This is particularly important if you live alone. Answer the following questions and/or indicate where the items are. Ensure you cross out what does not apply:

Personal

1. NHS Card and/or NHS Number
2. Marriage certificate
3. Birth certificate or date of birth
4. Maiden name if married woman
5. If married, name of spouse
6. If married, occupation of spouse
7. Present or last employer
8. Present or last occupation
9. Mortgage details
10. Home insurance details
11. Life insurance details
12. Rent book(s)
13. Gas supplier details
14. Electricity supplier details
15. Water supplier details
16. Telephone account details
17. Car details
18. Details of your GP
19. Any medication? (state location)
20. Solicitors details
21. Living Will
22. Organ donor cards
23. Lasting Power of Attorney - Health and Welfare

Financial Details

24. Bank account
25. Building society account
26. Credit card(s)
27. Unit Trust(s)
28. ISA Fund(s)
29. Share(s)
30. Premium Bond(s)
31. State pension
32. Occupational pension
33. War pension
34. Hire purchase agreement(s)
35. Accountant
36. Stock Broker
37. Charitable donation(s)
38. Lasting Power of Attorney - Property and Financial

Donating body to medical science

39. Location of agreement

Pacemaker

40. Do you have a pacemaker or similar battery powered appliance fitted **YES NO**

Online and Social Media Presence

41. Email addresses
42. Passwords
43. Keypad entry codes



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