

Natural Burial

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Natural Burial

50 shades of green burial.

- green
- woodland
- nature reserve
- natural

Natural Burial

Ownership

- Private business
- Charitable Trust
- Local Authority

Natural Burial

Some natural burial grounds are very formal in appearance; others are little more than fields.

- extensions of conventional cemeteries
- agricultural fields grazed by sheep
- existing orchards, woodlands or meadows
- developing nature reserves

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Coffins/caskets/shrouds

- veneered chipboard
- solid wood
- wicker
- cardboard
- woollen shrouds

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Embalming ?

Key Issues	Negative and Not Sustainable		Positive and Sustainable
Energy Consumption	At an average of 1000°C for 75 minutes per person, cremation uses about the same amount of energy as a household might use in a month.		There is no comparable energy consumption for natural burial.
Global Warming	Crematoria generate a huge amount of CO ₂ ; they are very seldom run for fuel efficiency, and waste heat is not captured and re-used.		Burial is carbon-capture, releasing no CO ₂ at all. The planting of trees further balances the human impact.
Pollution	Despite modern standards, crematoria still generate pollution. Pollution is decreased by raising temperatures, but this increases fuel use and emissions of CO ₂ .	When buried, non-biodegradable coffins, synthetic clothing and embalmed bodies add to soil pollution.	When using only natural and biodegradable materials for burial, there is no comparable pollution
Embalming	Embalming is the replacement of the body's blood with a formaldehyde-based fluid. It is usually unnecessary, contributes to pollution and adds to the funeral bill	Embalming using biodegradable chemicals – this is equally invasive, more expensive and seldom available as an option.	No embalming.
Coffins	Veneered chipboard coffins made with formaldehyde resin: manufacture, burial or cremation of these is polluting. Other non-biodegradable coffins, plastic liners, varnishes, nameplates and other coffin furniture.	Solid wood or otherwise biodegradable coffins that are manufactured with poor social and environmental ethics and imported to Britain.	Biodegradable coffins or shrouds from ethical manufacturers and distributors.

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Irrespective of their approach, natural Burial grounds should be places where bodies are buried in a natural setting, in a manner that creates a positive impact on the environment.

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Habitat Features – Mosaic

- Woodland
- Meadow
- Parkland trees
- Water feature
- Hedgerows (species rich/native)
- Paths/buildings
- Scrub

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Memorials

- Trees
- Plaques
- Benches
- Bird/bat boxes
- Bird feeders

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Management Issues

- Grief litter/unauthorised memorials
- “Looks untidy”
- DIY Funerals
- Finding unmarked graves
- Volunteers

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- Biodiversity resource
- Greater choice for residents
- Establishment costs
- Community involvement/volunteers
- Low cost funerals