



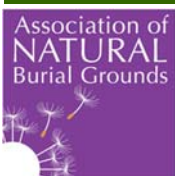
St Albans Woodland  
Burial Trust

Registered Charity No. 1118216

## Woodland Burial *The natural choice*



This year we have seen a substantial increase in the number of people from all over the south of England making reservations or coming to the woodland burial ground for burials or interments of ashes. Inevitably some of this is because churchyards are now closed, or so full their use is restricted. However visitors are quick to tell us that their minds are made up and the choice made easy when they see just how beautiful our woodland looks, especially when compared to commercial cemeteries. We know that this a unique place and the Trustees take seriously their responsibility to look after this beautiful woodland for generations to come. We hope you enjoy your visit.



**St Albans Woodland Burial Trust (Registered Charity No. 1118216)**

Located via The College Equestrian Centre Church Road, Keysoe, Bedford. MK44 2JP.

Administrator: Mrs Linda Parry, c/o St Mark's Church Community Centre Tel/Fax +44 1234 342613  
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For information visit our website [www.woodlandburialtrust.com](http://www.woodlandburialtrust.com)



## From Linda Parry - Administrator

When we produced our last newsletter it was for the Open Day in 2014 which was a part of the Diocese of St Albans 'Celebrate 100' event on August Bank Holiday Monday last year. The days leading up to it were glorious but on the day the heavens opened and continued to do so for most of the day. This did not dampen the spirits of those who attended, over 4000 joined in the celebrations and more than 350 visited our marquee to sample the delicious refreshments served on beautiful crockery.

We had numerous suggestions for the names of the new glades and from them all we chose Nightingale, Chaffinch and Bullfinch. These are all now in use and are looking outstanding, thanks to the hard work of Will Saunders and his dedicated team.

The beauty and simplicity of the area is well publicised on the website and we have had visitors from as far afield as Bristol, Essex and even Canada and France. The beginning of this year has been extremely busy, in the first 3 months we have had 29 services. Last year from April 14 – March 15 we had 53. It was personally sad for me to see a number of clients who I had come to know over the years, take their place at the woodland. These were people who had reserved places some years ago and who had become Friends of St Albans Woodland Burial Trust.

I should like to thank all for keeping the Woodland so natural and simple and for understanding our ethos. The Woodland will be there for future generations and we'd like to think that the future generations will care for it as much as we do. I do have my work cut out trying to ensure that everybody keeps to the rules of the woodland as set out by the Trustees. These are in place to enable us to keep the woodland as natural as possible and not looking like a commercial cemetery. May I remind you all that we do not allow any planting, of any kind, nor delineation of graves, only one pot is allowed at each plot. If you, or friends who visit, have left pots or planted things, then a letter will be sent reminding you of the regulations and ask that these are removed. If not we will remove them. Unfortunately, we do not have room for cars up in the glades so, unless you are transporting someone who is infirm, we ask that you leave your car in the car park and walk to the glades. Would you also note that only the shingle road is for vehicles, not the grass walkways.

Over the years you have been generous to us and have given donations to the work of the Trust. There was one particularly generous gift as a result of a golf day which was organised by one of our Friends. This money has been kept in reserve and we intend to use all such donations to seek to introduce a Memorial Lodge. This will be a multipurpose place where services may be held or meetings with clients. It might also be a place of quiet where one might sit and reflect. There will be the opportunity for you to contribute to this fund at the Open Day.



Chaffinch

I very much appreciate your continued support and the shared moments which I have had with people over the years have been invaluable, I have been included in many precious occasions with you all and for that I thank you.

*Linda*

*The Trustees would like to express our considerable thanks to Linda and her supportive husband Edward. As volunteers they are tireless in supporting the bereaved and caring for the woodland.*

## From The Trustees

### Kate Abrahams tells how she became a Trustee of the Woodland Burial Ground

In 1999 I was secretary of the PCC at St Denys Church, Colmworth. We were approached by an enthusiastic vicar from Bedford who was disturbed by the lack of burial spaces available in Bedford and the distress this was causing some of his parishioners. Add to this his belief in burial communing with nature and Reverend Charles Royden's proposals for a woodland burial ground on the Glebe land in Colmworth seemed a great idea.



St Albans Woodland Burial Ground Trust was founded and I became a trustee, initially representing St Denys Church. The concept of burial in a natural environment and the comfort it could bring both to people looking to the end of their lives and to the bereaved, was very appealing. Unfortunately too many hurdles prevented us using the land at Colmworth and when, a few years later Charlie found the site at Keysoe, I was keen to see the project through.

It has been a very positive experience and an enjoyable journey watching the Woodland Burial Ground glades develop and become occupied. I walk my dog up there sometimes and the wildlife and scenery differ every time I go. It is always peaceful.



My role as a trustee is minimal; I am a dab hand at making cakes and serving tea and attending meetings. However it is a privilege to be associated with a group of people who give up so much of their time to help and comfort the dying and the bereaved. The charity itself is run efficiently and professionally and I feel confident that the Woodland Burial Ground will remain an oasis for those seeking a natural burial in a beautiful environment for many decades to come.

**Kate Abrahams**

In the last twelve months we have brought into use five more glades in the woodland. We have continued with our birds theme, with introduction of names such as Owl, Chaffinch and Nightingale. Our Administrator Linda Parry has been particularly busy over the past six months with a considerable increase in burials and reservations. Not surprising when you see the beauty of the woodland.

**I would like to become a Friend of the St Albans Woodland Burial Trust £25 (5yrs)**

*If enclosing a cheque please pay to St Albans Woodland Burial Trust*

Name

Address

*These details will not be passed to any third party*

Email

Telephone

Please Gift Aid my donations (Yes / No)

**Please return to: St Albans Woodland Burial Trust.** The Administrator: Mrs Linda Parry  
St. Mark's Church Community Centre, Calder Rise, Bedford. MK41 7UY. Tel/Fax 01234 342613  
Email: [office@woodlandburialtrust.com](mailto:office@woodlandburialtrust.com) [www.woodlandburialtrust.com](http://www.woodlandburialtrust.com)

## **'A beautiful, green, safe haven - a place of peace and love for me and the one I love.'**

*We receive numerous kind letters from families who have appreciated the woodland and found it a place of welcome and support at a time of bereavement. The following letter is from Simeon*

My mum, Kay Jenkin, died on the 1st of December 2009. We'd talked about what we wanted to happen to us when we died and had both agreed that a cardboard coffin and a woodland burial was the way to go. I'd done research on the subject of coffins and burial sites, using the Internet and making follow-up phone calls, and Kay had got some leaflets from Quaker friends. She'd indicated to me that she was interested in the St Albans Woodland Burial Trust site at Keysoe.

Browsing the website for the Keysoe burial ground, I experienced a few misgivings. Compared to another site I'd looked at, it seemed a bit bleak. The photo was of a wintery scene with some rather short, sparse-looking trees! The burial ground was quite new. However, the thing that decided me in favour of Keysoe was the fact that the ground, itself, was consecrated and, therefore, the graves could not be dug up and turned into a car park or something.

I was very distressed when Kay died. It was a good thing that we'd decided what to do in advance. It was also a good thing that we'd chosen Keysoe and the most excellent Linda Parry to help us with Kay's final journey. From the moment I phoned Linda to make arrangements, I found myself in the hands of a truly kind and loving person. Linda obviously understood my distress and made a considerable effort to make everything as easy for me as possible.

On the 17th of December, I buried my mum in Robin 42, next to Chris Tomkowski. The morning was bitterly cold but, as luck would have it, the sky was blue and the sun shone down on me and Kay and her friends as we said our goodbyes. I cried a lot that day.

I visit Kay once every month or so. I've watched the glades grow and develop, and the seasons come and go. When I arrive, I walk about saying hello to the others who are buried around her; babies, children, young adults and some very old people. I feel that they are friends; people who understand my grief; people who have been placed in the ground by loving hands, just like mine.

The trees are getting big now. Life goes on all around my mum: little things moving in the undergrowth, the sound of horses in the distance. Where she is resting is a beautiful, green, safe haven - a place of peace and love for me and the one I love.

*Simeon*

### **Figures for St Albans Woodland Burial Trust in each financial year since it was opened in 2007**

	<b>Burials</b>	<b>Interment of ashes</b>	<b>Reservation for burials</b>	<b>Reservation for ashes</b>
June2007-March2008	12	6	13	9
April 2008-March 2009	13	9	15	9
April 2009-March 2010	20	13	37	7
April2010-March2011	19	15	34	10
April 2011-March 2012	13	13	36	23
April 2012-March 2013	18	18	43	16
April 2013-March 2014	26	14	52	16
April 2014 - March 2015	33	29	32	17
<b>Total</b>	<b>154</b>	<b>117</b>	<b>262</b>	<b>107</b>