



**When Eastenders star Wendy Richards** died recently she was laid to rest in a bamboo coffin. People now choose environmentally friendly coffins, even if they do not choose woodland burial. We are pleased to include this feature from Eco-coffins about their cardboard coffins. Woodland burial was once associated with cardboard coffins very closely and viewed with some suspicion. People who use our woodland now use a variety of natural products such as wood and wicker to create the most beautiful traditional coffins, however cardboard has also clearly come of age and the new models are strong and dignified with beautiful designs.

**From Eco** These are toxic times, of the 600,000 people who die in the UK per year, around 80% are buried or cremated in a chipboard veneer coffin, these coffins are major polluters of the earth and air as they release significant quantities of synthetic resins and formaldehyde as they breakdown in the soil or are cremated. An obvious and now viable solution to this significant contributor to pollution is the use of a coffin made exclusively of recycled cardboard and containing zero pollutants.

**Green is the new black** In 2005 Eco Coffins Ltd started using an innovative material called NatureBoard™, a cardboard derivative which has a neutral impact on the environment. Two years of exhaustive development later Eco Coffins Ltd had produced a coffin that not only looked wonderful, and wonderfully solid, but also contained absolutely no polluting substances. NatureBoard™ is suitable for burial and cremation; in burial they biodegrade completely in about three months, in cremation they release 83% fewer particulates and have 72% less Carbon Monoxide emissions than an industry standard chipboard veneer coffin. Additionally, because the material can be printed on, they are available in a range of colourful designs as well as more traditional natural finishes.

**Celebrating life** NatureBoard™ coffins are made in a variety of finishes, for the more traditional there are a range of natural finishes, but many people now chose to have a coffin with a design, and the coffins are available in a range of colourful designs, to help the funeral become a celebration of a life lived.

**Let your last footprint be a green one** To reduce their carbon footprint still further, Eco Coffins Ltd does not outsource production overseas, all the manufacturing is done in the UK and much of it by hand. Director Sophie Dansie says "Choosing an environmentally friendly coffin is a responsible choice, it not only has a direct impact on our fragile environment, it also makes a huge statement to families, friends and the next generation of the importance of caring for our planet." Eco Coffins Ltd tel: 01223 605 433 info@ecocoffins.com www.ecocoffins.com

**We want you as our Friend !**

We welcome you as a Friend of the Trust, five years membership is £25 and you will receive updates on progress at the woodland. Please complete the form and return it to us. You can now also register as a friend online at [www.woodlandburialtrust.com](http://www.woodlandburialtrust.com)

**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

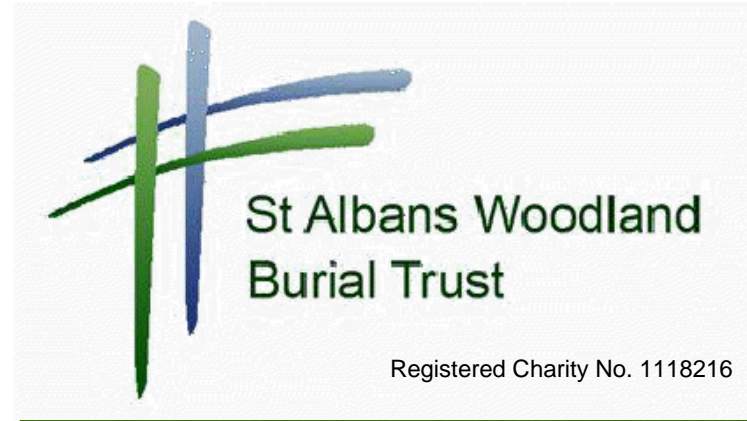
*These details will not be passed to any third party*

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 www.woodlandburialtrust.com



**Woodland Burial**  
*The natural choice*



*This picture was taken during the snow in February. The woodland was covered in a beautiful white blanket for several days.*

**Open Day**  
**Saturday**  
**June 27**

**2.00pm**  
**5.00pm**

You are invited to our Open Day in June. Refreshments will be served throughout the afternoon. This is an occasion when we look forward to welcoming back our friends as well as meeting new ones.

**For more information please visit our website [www.woodlandburialtrust.com](http://www.woodlandburialtrust.com)**



## Listening to what our Friends have to say ....

I have recently been diagnosed with terminal cancer and have been given up to a year to live. However I have every intention of confounding the doctors and making it to at least my 50<sup>th</sup> birthday (which falls on the same day as the London Olympics opening ceremony in 2012!).

My doctor told me to go home and 'set my affairs in order'. One of my priorities was to plan my funeral. What worried me was the idea of people having to attend a church swathed in black, a black coffin being taken in a black hearse to a gloomy churchyard leaving my daughters and husband with horrible memories of the day. I want my life to be celebrated with bright colours, beautiful scenery, birdsong, joy and hopefully some laughter! I am not religious. My creator is Mother Nature and it's to nature that I wish to return. I have known for many years that I wish to be buried in woodland.

I already had a health scare last year so had done some initial research about green burials. This time I typed Woodland Burial in to Google and found the St Albans Woodland Burial Trust. Within minutes I knew I had found my resting place. The web site is so well presented; it is clear and informative without being loaded with ads (which is not the case on many commercial sites) but most importantly the environmental benefits were made clear (in fact I think this should appear as the first item on the home page!)

I was reassured to learn about the consecrated status of the land and to know that it is a resting place which cannot be changed or developed. Although it is not near my home in Kent it is actually perfectly placed for all my friends and relatives across England to travel to.

I e-mailed and spoke to Linda Parry. I had no idea where to begin! Having had the good fortune of not losing anyone close to me I have never had to make funeral arrangements before. Linda has so much experience in helping people through what can be such a difficult time; she is so warm and friendly and exudes such calm and reassurance.

I have now visited the site with my husband David. We went a week after the heavy snow which was still thick on the ground. It looked so beautiful and I can only imagine once spring arrives and the trees are in bud it will be even lovelier. If I am well enough we have every intention of returning when the weather is warmer and enjoying a walk through the woodlands.

I imagine that when my family and friends attend my burial they will all understand why I made this choice. I imagine that many will want to be buried here too. I know there is not a more perfect place to return to Mother Nature.

Sarah February 2009



### Find us on the World Wide Web

St Albans Woodland Burial Ground now has a new website which we keep up to date with all of the latest news. You can find us at [www.woodlandburialtrust.com](http://www.woodlandburialtrust.com)

Our website now has some video which also appears on YouTube, we hope to develop this during the year to enable people to make a virtual visit to our woodland.



## Looking back over the year and to the future

We have seen a considerable growth in interest in woodland burial across the media in the past year and we have noticed a corresponding increase in the number of people who have decided to be buried in the woodland. We have taken many reservations and quite a number of interments of ashes following cremation.



*This ashes plot is one of many which have been chosen this year by families seeking a place for interment.*

The amount of interest has encouraged us to move ahead with the opening of other glades. The largest of the two new glades has been named 'Robin' and it is accessed off our first glade 'Skylark.' These two areas look a bit bare at the moment but things are set to change over the coming weeks. We have appointed a contractor to seed the glades with new grass seed and to deal with any weeds and brambles. The target is that by the beginning of the summer we should see some real improvement in the quality of the grass and much less of the weeds. In addition to the two large glades we have also opened a much smaller glade named 'Wren.' This is located on the right of the path as you enter the woodland. The Trustees have done this to provide an opportunity to offer burials without charge to those who are unfortunate to have to deal with the loss of a child. A further glade 'Curlew' will be developed over the summer.

We are aware that with our long term vision for the development of the woodland we need to replace some of the existing trees with a variety of different species. We have already started this process with the inclusion of new trees such as Alder, Willow and Oak. There will be an ongoing process of planting and eventually we will be able to establish a canopy and encourage more diversity of habitat for wildlife.

## Future developments

We do want to make sure that as Trustees we are responsive to all of the views of the Friends of the Woodland Trust and those who visit. We have purchased two additional signboards for the woodland which will assist new visitors accessing the site. The Trustees have also agreed to provide a noticeboard in the car park which will give visitors information about the woodland.

We are committed to the woodland being environmentally friendly and for this reason the Trustees insist on certain rules being followed, such as refraining from planting and cultivation. Occasionally items such as flowers are left at the woodland in plastic wrappers or pots. We understand why tributes are important but ask that they be all natural, these will then be left to naturally degrade. If artificial flowers or containers are left then these will be respectfully removed as we manage the site. Our vision is for the woodland to be a very beautiful, natural setting in which wildlife flourishes, we look forward to working with all our Friends each year as the woodland grows more beautiful as a tribute to our loved ones.

**Charles Royden** (Chair of St Albans Woodland Burial Trust)