



# Dorset Downs

Natural Burial Meadow

 Leedam





# Quintessential downland

The Dorset Downs natural burial meadow sits in the heart of the West Dorset countryside, above the village of Compton Valence, just five miles from the county town of Dorchester. This beautiful land, a designated part of the Dorset Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, is farmed by the Russell family, who have lived here for several generations.

The natural burial ground is restored to pre-war downland having been ploughed for many years in a drive for more home-grown food. The adjacent downland is already a Site of Nature Conservation Interest (SNCI) and it is expected that within a relatively short space of time the natural burial ground will become imbued with the same wildflower species.

The wildflower rich mix of seed we have sown, together with the restored and newly planted hedgerows should help encourage wildlife and give shelter to the reborn downland. It's a place that's special to us, which we hope others will share and enjoy.

# How it works

A natural burial is the most ecological funeral option, a thoughtful legacy for future generations. The meadow will remain as it is now, permanent pasture - genuine, farmed countryside.

## In advance

- Visit the burial meadow and spend time there getting to know it and deciding whether it's right for you.
- Download an application form from our website, or phone us and we'll send you an information pack.
- Pre-purchase at today's rate. Options available to pay by standing order.

## Practicalities

We recommend stout footwear as the ground is uneven. A foldable chair is a good idea for those who find it difficult to stand and remember, there's no such thing as bad weather, just the wrong sort of clothes...

There is a wealth of information about natural burial on our website [www.dorsetnaturalburials.co.uk](http://www.dorsetnaturalburials.co.uk) and we are here in the Leedam Natural Heritage office to answer your questions - 01600 716438.

## When planning a funeral

- Complete an interment form to let us know your plans for the day so that we can help you achieve your wishes.
- Make the arrangements yourself or ask your funeral director to do this for you.
- Book the date and time with us. Burials may take place 10am-3pm and at weekends by special arrangement.



# Our custodians



## **Tessa and Jeremy**

Mobile: 07818 037184

Office: 01600 716438

Email: [dorset@leedam.com](mailto:dorset@leedam.com)



Our custodians at Dorset Downs are Tessa and Jeremy Russell. Tessa grew up on the farm alongside several other Chick family members and continues to live here today.

On the day of a funeral, they will be there to welcome and look after you.

Please contact the office if you would like to arrange a visit or learn more about having a natural burial at Dorset Downs. If you prefer to explore the burial meadow independently, please feel free to visit and have a wander around.



# More time and space

The Dorset Downs natural burial meadow lies at the heart of the Dorset Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

It is tranquil and private. An unhurried and gentle place to get away from it all. It is somewhere quiet to be with your memories, to take one step at a time, close to nature, whatever the weather, throughout the seasons.

A landscape photograph showing a field of tall grass and wildflowers in the foreground. In the middle ground, there is a large, dark, dense bush or small tree. The background is a flat horizon under a sky with soft, golden light from the setting or rising sun, with some wispy clouds and a few thin white lines (possibly power lines or contrails) visible. The overall mood is peaceful and reflective.

“A sad occasion became  
full of love, friendship  
and time for reflection”

# Make the day your own

The meadow gives you the freedom to be yourselves.

Whether you are planning a simple interment with only a few in attendance or a larger funeral event we will offer inspiration, support and guidance, so you can organise the day exactly as you'd like it.







## Flowers

Consider using flowers from your garden, or a friend's, or produce from the veg patch to create a hand-tied bouquet. Ask florists to use these or locally grown flowers. No plastic, Oasis foam or wire, please.

Think about scattering petals from a basket or single stems into the grave.



## Pets

Dogs offer comfort and companionship, especially at funerals. Dogs on leads are welcome at the burial meadow.

A pet's ashes may be included in its owner's grave at the time of interment.

# Memorial plaques

Oak memorial plaques engraved with names and dates commemorate people buried in the meadow.

The plaques are housed between the upright timbers of the walls of the memorial shelter, located within the top corner of the meadow nearest the entrance.

Rights to display a plaque are granted for a period of 25 years after which they can be renewed.

Alwyn Littlewood

1943 - 2010

Peter J. Twedde

1938 - 2008

Susan Patricia Ravenhill

1949 - 2010

Doreen Waring

1924 - 2010

John Desmond Newton

1935 - 2007

Stan R. L. Westacott

1927 - 2010

Barry Rees

1973 - 2010

Robert L. H. K. Pattinson

1930 - 2009

Felicity Nash

1927 - 2009

Simon Christopher Cresser

1988 - 2010

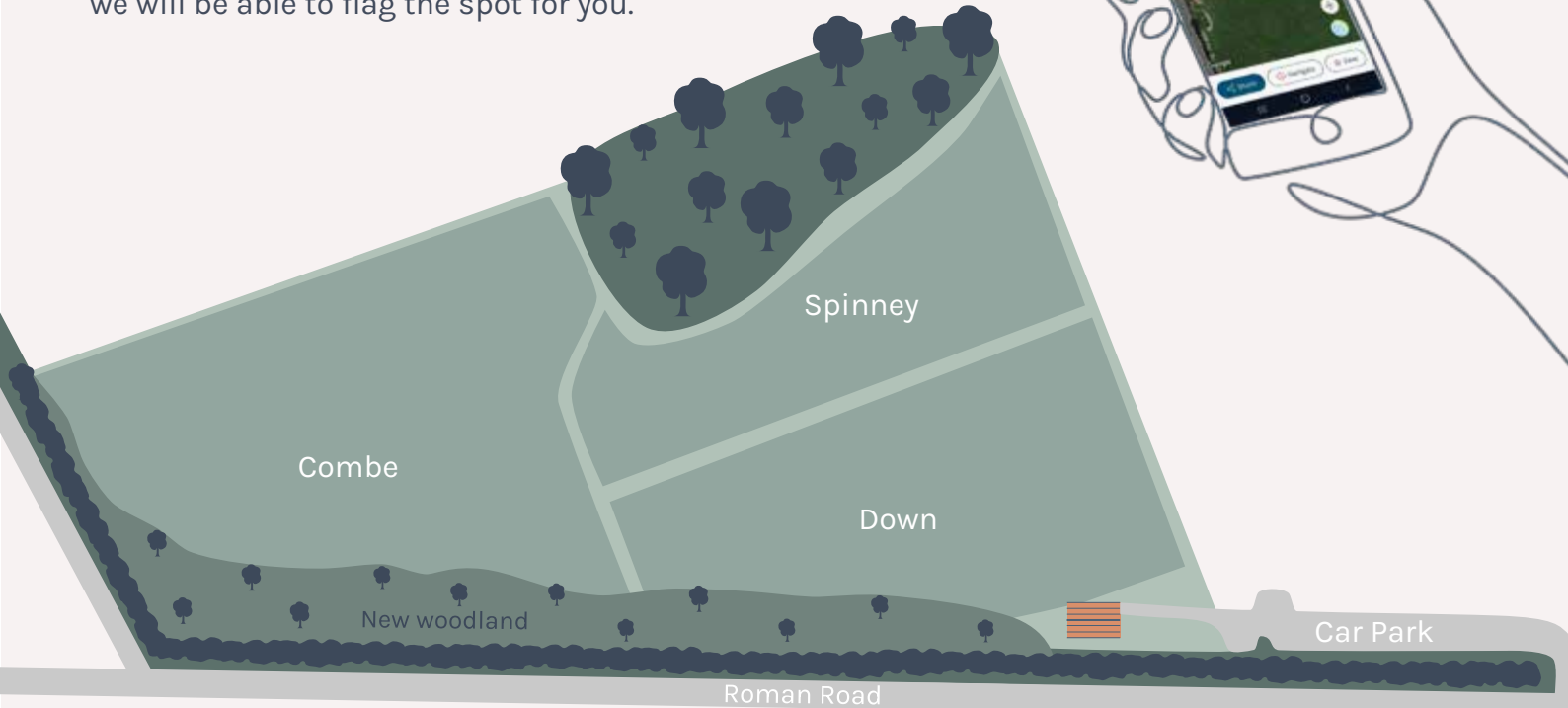
Elsie Rabjohns

1907 - 2010

# Finding the spot

Graves are carefully mapped and their exact GPS locations and What3Words addresses are recorded and shared with you so that you'll know where to visit.

If you struggle with any of these, don't worry, we will be able to flag the spot for you.





### Dorset Downs Natural Burial Meadow

Roman Road, Winterbourne Abbas  
Dorchester, Dorset, DT2 9ET (*not for correspondence*)

[Google Maps Plus Code: PCGQ+8G Dorchester](#)

[What3Words.com////delighted.sundial.compress](http://What3Words.com////delighted.sundial.compress)

You can find us on the Roman Road just off the A35 Bridport Road, west of Dorchester. Look out for the large entrance signs.

Contact the office for the code to access the burial meadow car park.

### Custodians

Tessa and Jeremy Russell  
t. 07818 037184  
e. [dorset@leedam.com](mailto:dorset@leedam.com)

### Office

Leedam Natural Heritage  
26 Agincourt Square  
Monmouth, NP25 3BT  
t. 01600 716438

Facebook [@dorsetnaturalburials](#)

Instagram [@dorset\\_downs\\_nbg](#)

[www.dorsetnaturalburials.co.uk](http://www.dorsetnaturalburials.co.uk)



**Leedam**

Leedam Natural Heritage is a trading name of  
Native Woodland Ltd, registered in Scotland  
Company No. SC240278

Pre-purchase form - Valid from 1 April 2024 - 31 March 2025

## 1. The applicant (the person who will be responsible for payment)

Your name	
Your address	
Your email address	
Your telephone number(s)	

## 2. For whom is the right of burial being purchased?

Their full name (☐ as above)			
Their address (☐ as above)			
Their date of birth		Relationship You are their...	
Selected area		<input type="checkbox"/> Ashes	<input type="checkbox"/> Burial

## 3. OPTIONAL - Purchase an adjacent right of burial

Their full name			
Their address (☐ as above)			
Their date of birth		<input type="checkbox"/> Ashes	<input type="checkbox"/> Burial

## 4. Applicant's signature and declaration

The information given on this form is accurate. I am the person to whom all correspondence should be sent and am responsible for paying the amounts shown in the table below and agree to be bound by Leedam's Terms and Conditions ([www.leedam.co.uk/burial-contract](http://www.leedam.co.uk/burial-contract)) and the Burial Ground Regulations ([www.leedam.com/rules-and-regulations/](http://www.leedam.com/rules-and-regulations/)) which apply.

Signature		Date	
Full name			
How did you hear about the burial ground?			

Continued overleaf...

Return by email to [dorset@leedam.co.uk](mailto:dorset@leedam.co.uk)

or by post to Leedam, The Market Tavern, 26 Agincourt Square, Monmouth, NP25 3BT | 01600 716 438 1/2

## 5. Payment options

At this stage only the right of burial (or ashes interment) can be reserved; the registration fee, memorial rights and the gravedigging charges are always paid at prevailing rate at the time of the burial.

Item	2024-25 Price	£
Ashes Plot - Combe	£745	
Ashes Plot - Down	£410	
Ashes Plot - Spinney	£475	
Burial Plot - Combe	£1,500	
Burial Plot - Down	£820	
Burial Plot - Spinney	£950	
<b>Optional</b>		
Reserve the Adjacent Plot	Please insert price:	
Standing order admin fee*	£75	
TOTAL:		
Payable to Leedam Natural Heritage, Account No: 06006136, Sort Code: 80-02-38		

\*Please add the Standing Order Admin Fee if you wish to spread payments over 10 or 20 months and make arrangements with your bank to pay monthly instalments to Leedam Natural Heritage a/c 06006136, s/c 80-02-38, quoting ref: DoDo+Yourname.

Please note - At the time of the burial or ashes interment there will be two additional charges: (i) the Registration Fee, and (ii) the gravedigger's charges.

We will send you a certificate (or certificates if you are also reserving the adjacent plot) confirming your reserved right(s) of burial and a receipt for your payment.

## 6. Updates and how we use your personal data

We would like to be able to contact you about future matters concerning the burial ground and any new options that might become available. If you agree to being contacted this way please tick the relevant boxes:  Email  Post  Phone (you can opt out at any time).

Personal data you supply will be used to confirm the purchase and to register rights sold at the burial ground. We share details of the event and the people involved with the custodian to prepare them for your arrival. We may also use it for statistical analysis. We will not share your data with other organisations. View our privacy policy for further information ([www.leedam.co.uk/privacy-policy](http://www.leedam.co.uk/privacy-policy)). We are obliged to keep a register of all burials and interments, recording the date of burial, names in full, age, address and grave number. By law, this data must be accessible to the public.



# For when I die...



## Message

TIP - Write a message here to the person who reads this document

My full name

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My home address

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My date of birth

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The key person/people to contact in case of my death

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They are my... (son, daughter, executor etc)

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Their contact details are...

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I have made a will, it is kept here<sup>1</sup>

TIP - if you haven't, you probably should get a solicitor-written will, a service which is often offered in return for a charitable donation

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<sup>1</sup> Edit or delete as necessary



## I have a pre-paid funeral plan<sup>2</sup>

TIP - Don't feel pressured into taking out a pre-paid funeral plan, it can be just as good to keep your money in a savings account, because of the fees charged by the plan provider and commissions paid out to the person who arranged it.

Plan details -

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## I have set aside money to pay for my funeral

Bank:

Account No:

Sort code:

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## Telephone tree – who to call

I attach a list of people to call and have highlighted those who should be asked to let others know.

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## Newspaper ? Online announcement

No | Yes \* (say where) | No Preference

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## I have decided to be

Buried | Cremated \*

Name of natural burial ground, cemetery or crematorium

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<sup>2</sup> Edit or delete as necessary

## Have I reserved a plot?

No | Yes\* - the papers relating to this are attached

Location:

No, I would like my ashes to be scattered. (TIP - this requires the landowner's consent and is not great for the environment or ecologically sound)

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## Funeral director

None if possible (using a FD is not a legal requirement in the UK)

First choice

Second choice

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## Preferred coffin / shroud

(TIP - locally made from biodegradable materials such as wicker, wood, wool, or recycled fabrics like cotton sheets)

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## Before the funeral

**Embalming** - An unnatural, invasive and toxic process, also called hygienic treatment by some FDs. If you are having a natural burial you should ask not to be embalmed - the poisonous chemicals will kill soil microbes and leech into groundwater)

I do | I do not \* wish to be embalmed

## Where to rest

before the funeral for some or all of the period

## I would like to be buried with / next to

(TIP - You can reserve an adjacent plot in most cases. Also, extra cremated remains can be included as part of a burial, even your pet's ashes can go in with you.)

## Viewing

(TIP - for some this is important, but don't delay viewing)

I am happy for my body to be viewed: No | Yes \* | No Preference

Instructions for laying out

My family may/may not\* help lay me out if they wish

## Hair

## Clothes, glasses etc.

(TIPS - it's a struggle to dress a dead body which you might prefer to avoid.

For natural burial, choose natural, biodegradable fabrics like cotton, silk, wool, leather etc.)

## Make-up

## The funeral

Think about what's important when organising your funeral...

## Funeral Service

### Who to invite

### Type of service

(Tip: Services at crematoriums, natural burial grounds, and cemeteries can be religious and non-religious or of mixed religion. You can also choose to have no service at all.)

### Dress code

**Arrival** perhaps you would like to arrive on a hay-trailer behind a vintage tractor...

**Venue** (Tip: You can have a funeral service anywhere - at your local pub, hotel, your home, or even outdoors with a simple committal beforehand, and maybe a wake there too after the funeral.)

### Celebrant / Minister

**Words...** provide some help with an outline of your life, special events (we have collected some here <http://www.leedam.com/words-and-music.html>).

## Order of ceremony sheet

Folded A4 card with a paper insert sheet? (TIP: why not include a seed card, pack of seeds or acorn to take away to plant?)

## Photograph

## Readings

## Music

## Video

**Flowers** (TIP - instead of florist's flowers, gather flowers from the garden or specimens from the veg patch. Alternatively suggest a favourite item like a hat, flag, fishing gear, model boat, remote-controlled car etc. to be placed on the coffin)

## Photos

Photography/video recording

**Special things** - like a hat, emblem, craftwork, baking, scent, tipple, crossword...

**Collection** – which charity?

## Special instructions

**Vehicles** (hearse, limo, own cars etc)

**Bearers** (list if there are any people you would like to be asked to bear the coffin)

## Gathering after funeral service

Place

Instructions

## Newspaper report

## Memorial

Type of memorial  
(if any is permitted)

Inscription

## Anniversaries

## Tree Planting

## FINANCIAL MATTERS

I attach a list of my bank accounts, building society accounts, savings bonds, insurance plans, pension plans, shares and investments etc

## BUSINESS MATTERS

I attach a list of my Business partners, Solicitor, Accountant, Landlord(s), Tenant(s) etc