

oldparkmeadow.co.uk



Natural Burial Ground

Rest in the heart of nature

Information Pack



Welcome to Old Park Meadow

However you decide to commemorate a life, we are here to help. Located in a tranquil setting in the heart of Essex, between Chelmsford and Great Dunmow, our 34-acre site holds of a variety of grasses, trees, and wildflowers, creating the perfect place for natural burials.

We offer burial and ash interment plots in our meadow grounds. We can hold funerals, services, and wakes. You will find a range of options, from state-of-the-art facilities and unique memorials to our catering service.

At Old Park Meadow there are no time constraints and no fixed formats. We are open to people of all faiths, backgrounds, and from anywhere. We welcome you to get in touch for more information, and to explore the different ways you can get involved with our community here at Old Park Meadow.

Kind regards,
Delyse Jackaman

Delyse



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What is a Natural Burial?

Natural burials allow us to manage the end of our lives in a more natural and positive way. Natural burials remove elements of the traditional burial process that can slow natural decomposition and damage surrounding ecosystems. A natural burial allows you to rest in scenic surroundings, where family and friends can return and see the landscape grow with each passing year.

What is the difference between a natural burial and a cemetery burial?

While we do offer plenty of flexibility and choice, as a true natural burial ground there are some requirements that must be followed. This is to ensure that we support the natural lifecycle process and to help conserve our local ecosystems. For example, the coffin and burial clothes must be made of biodegradable materials and natural fibres and embalming is not permitted. Burial plots cannot be marked with ornaments, soft toys, balloons, photographs, or cards. This is because they cannot biodegrade and can be harmful to local wildlife. For more information about our environmental measures, please turn to page 15.

Do natural burial grounds help to protect local wildlife?

At Old Park Meadow, we want our natural burial ground to be a haven for wildlife as well as a peaceful final resting place. Our 34 acres of beautiful meadows and young woodland offer a variety of safe, natural habitats for plants and wildlife. We manage and plant our site using traditional, balanced land management techniques. Working with the local council, Woodland Trust, and Essex Wildlife Trust, we have created an environment that is long-lasting and suitable for indigenous flora and fauna. We have a variety of bird boxes, including two nesting boxes for barn owls, hedgehog and bat boxes, a pond, and an array of wildflowers and trees.

Who can have a natural burial?

We believe that anyone should be able to choose a sustainable and beautiful burial as their final resting place. Unlike other cemeteries and burial grounds, Old Park Meadow is open to people of all faiths, backgrounds, and from anywhere. Everything we offer is tailored to the individual. We can hold religious, non-religious, and humanist services in our on-site lodge, and won't charge any additional fees for people living outside of the local area. We are proud to offer services that cater to any need. Whatever your request, we will do everything we can to make it happen.

Burials and Ash Plots

There are four areas available for burials and ash plots, all with their own unique identity.

Bluebell Wood

Here, our young trees are accompanied by native bluebells. Every year, we plant bluebell bulbs in this area. Families are invited to help with this planting. Over time, this area will be home to thousands of bluebells and maturing trees.

Wildflower Meadow

This beautiful open space has wonderful views of the meadow. The whole area is sown with a mix of wildflowers.

Spring Corner

During the springtime, you will see an array of daffodils, tulips, snowdrops, grape hyacinths, and foxgloves flowering here. There are also a couple of small copses of trees.

Waters' View

This area is just outside the Old Park Lodge, overlooking the pond. Offering a tranquil space and great accessibility, you will see water lilies, and irises growing at different times of year alongside other water-loving plants.



Funeral and Remembrance Services

Our funeral and remembrance services help families celebrate lives lived and say goodbye in their own way. Old Park Meadow can accommodate religious funeral ceremonies, civil funerals (with or without religious content), and non-religious or humanist funerals. You might even decide to lead the funeral ceremony yourself. The service can take place at a time that suits you and can be as formal or informal as you wish. At Old Park Meadow, we offer you full flexibility and choice while supporting you with all the arrangements. We help you design a ceremony around your requirements and make sure every detail is taken care of. We understand that nothing should be left to chance on such an important day, so our experienced team will always be on hand to guide you through the process.

Old Park Lodge

Old Park Lodge, our on-site venue, was purpose-built for remembrance services. In designing the Lodge, we strove to make it as light and open as possible to bring the beauty of the outside in. A stunning wood and glass building with large folding doors, it is the perfect space for families and friends to come together and honour the life of their loved one. The Lodge can also be used as an alternative gathering place for greetings and goodbyes before and after a natural burial or cremation. It is also ideally suited for wakes.

Our Facilities

Our Lodge can hold 200 people and is flexibly designed to suit groups of any size. We are happy to arrange the room and seating according to your wishes. The Lodge also includes a separate area for gathering prior to and following the service. Our facilities include:

- Hearing loop.
- Easy access for wheelchair users.
- Excellent acoustics.
- High-quality audio system, including external speakers.
- Catering and refreshments.
- Air conditioning.



Reserving a Plot

Most of us don't like to think about what will happen when we are gone. Though it may be difficult, there are many reasons to consider reserving your burial plot in advance.

Ease the Burden

When someone passes away, a lot of responsibilities fall to the family, from settling the estate to organising the funeral. Some of these matters will need to be dealt with quickly, all while grieving and coming to terms with personal loss. By reserving a burial plot in advance, you can help to support your family through this difficult time. This will be one less thing for them to worry about and can help them to understand your wishes.

Choose Your Final Resting Place

Reserving a plot means you get to decide where your final resting place will be. You may like the idea of being among the trees in our Bluebell Wood, or maybe you would prefer a secluded spot deep in the meadows. We have beautiful areas all over the site, but the only way to guarantee you'll get your preferred choice is to reserve it in advance.

Avoid Potential Price Rises

While we are committed to keeping our prices consistent, there will inevitably be some changes in the future. To make sure you secure your perfect spot at the lowest possible price, we recommend that you book now. This will also ensure the expense is not left to your loved ones later down the line.

If you would like to be close to a loved one that is already here, or to reserve a plot for your own peace of mind, please contact us. We will talk you through the available options and help you make your choice.



Multimedia Tributes

At Old Park Lodge, we have a state-of-the-art music, livestream, and visual tribute system, allowing you to fully personalise the service.

Music

We can play music or hymns during the service that are special to you. To listen to our collection, go to www.obitus.com, click on music library (top right-hand side of screen), enter password: emotion. The same password will also work on the hymn library.

Visual Tributes

Photo and video tributes are a perfect way for mourners to remember the deceased. They are often shown in the middle of the service during a time of reflection. These are the options we offer.

Single Photo

Display a single picture on a large, high-definition screen during the service.

Simple Slideshow

A simple slideshow without music of up to 25 digitally rendered photos. This can be played on a loop throughout the entire service or just once at a requested time.

Professional Photo Tribute

A photo tribute of up to 25 photos set to a piece of music of the family's choice. Your photos will be fitted to play for the duration of your chosen piece of music. This is played at a specific time during the service and is perfect to support a time of reflection.

Family-supplied Video

Families can create their own video tribute. Files must be supplied in MP4 format and can contain any music or audio you wish to accompany the footage.

Please note we require content to be received at least 72 working hours prior to the service for professional photo tributes and at least 48 working hours for slideshows, single photos, and family-supplied videos. Once confirmed, you will receive a link to a secure webpage where you can upload the files.

Livestreaming

Livestreamed Services and Recordings

For those who cannot attend in person, we offer a live webcast service. Friends and family can view the service from their own computer, tablet, or smartphone. All that they will need is a good internet connection and a username and password for the secure page which we will provide. The service is captured by a single camera discreetly located at the back of the chapel. Additionally, recordings are available for 28 days from the funeral, or permanent copies can be purchased. These professionally edited and produced recordings provide a lasting memory.

We always recommend ordering well in advance of the service, for Livestreams in particular. Families will need time to share the username and password around in advance. These are the options we offer.

Livestream – Live and 28-day Watch Again

A high-quality live webcast, allowing family and friends to be a part of the service from wherever they are in the world. Anyone who missed the live service or wishes to view it again can do so at their convenience within 28 days on a secure, easy-to-use website.

Recording of the Service (DVD/Blue Ray/Memory Stick)

A professionally edited copy of the livestream on a DVD, Blue Ray, or memory stick, presented in a customised case.



Catering

Many families choose to share a meal or refreshments together at Old Park Meadow around their service or remembrance. This allows for a more informal moment to gather and share memories.

We have a selection of menus for you to choose from, such as afternoon teas and finger buffets. Or if you would like to feature a favourite dish, please get in touch with our team. We can cater to any dietary requirements such as gluten free, vegetarian, or vegan. There is a minimum order of fifteen guests. Please arrange all catering, including numbers, through Old Park Meadow. Final numbers will need to be confirmed seven working days before the service, and final numbers will be charged. We will do our best to deliver exactly to your instructions, but menus may be amended at the last minute subject to availability.



Memorials

Wooden Grave Marker

These markers provide a subtle, unobtrusive way of marking out a loved one's final resting place. You can choose to have a small 5.5" x 5.5" square wooden marker placed on the grave, flush to the ground. They can't be seen from a distance, but allow you to easily find a burial or ash interment plot.

Memorial Plaques for Benches

There are sites across the grounds that have been carefully selected for the placing of elegant teak benches. Visitors can sit, rest, and reflect, making it a perfect choice for a memorial. Each plaque will consist of a name and date, and you can place it on the bench of your choice, subject to space.

Engraved Slate Memorial Plaques

These come in the form of engraved grey slate tablets. The plaques are 30cm long, 6.5cm tall and 2cm thickness and entirely maintenance free. Once engraved, they are placed in our memorial frame, which is made of oak and stands in the Bluebell Wood.

Engraved Memorial on Oak Post

These upright oak posts with engraved slate plaques can be found in each area. The plaques measure 18cm long, 11cm tall and 2cm thickness. The slates can be inscribed with your loved one's name, year of birth, and year of death.

Engraved Leaf on Copper Memorial Tree

For something truly unique, a personalised engraved leaf can be placed on our stunning copper tree sculpture. Our one-of-kind sculpture stands beside the pond.



Sponsor a tree

Sponsoring a tree is a fitting tribute for your loved one and can become a landmark for your visits to Old Park Meadow. In some cases, it may be possible to plant a tree within the same area as a burial or ash interment. Any planted native British memorial trees from our list will be guaranteed for 5 years, during which time any failing trees will be replaced. We plant memorial trees throughout Old Park Meadow every autumn in accordance with good arboriculture practice.

Sponsor a wildlife box

Old Park Meadow is home to a wide range of local wildlife and we are constantly improving the habitat we provide for them. Habitat boxes are available to sponsor in memory of your loved one. We offer habitat boxes for a variety of wildlife, depending on the area in which they are to be placed. Examples include habitats for hedgehogs, birds, and bats. Sponsorship of a wildlife box includes a contribution to the cost of the box for its lifetime, providing a habitat for a guaranteed minimum of three years. Please speak to our team to find out more about the types of habitats available for sponsorships and the wildlife they protect.

Book of Remembrance

An entry in our Book of Remembrance provides families and friends with a lasting memorial of their loved one. Each entry is entered by hand by a calligrapher who visits Old Park Meadow. The date of inscription into the Book of Remembrance is a personal choice; it can be the day of the final goodbye or perhaps another date that holds a particular significance to your family.



Trees and Plants

Across our site there are 3,200 trees, over 500 metres of native hedgerow, and 400 metres of yew hedging. Below are the trees we have planted at Old Park Meadow, specially chosen to fit in with the local environment. Any one of these varieties can be adopted as a living memorial.

- Silver Birch
- Common Oak
- Common Dogwood
- Crab Apple
- Rowan
- Spindle
- Field Maple
- Wild Cherry
- Sweet Chestnut
- Hornbeam
- Hazel
- Aspen
- Small Leaved Lime
- Holly
- Apple



Silver Birch



Spindle



Common Oak

Here is a small selection of the native hedges, plants, grasses, and flowers we have planted across Old Park Meadow and in the memorial garden that surrounds Old Park Lodge. The Bluebell Wood is planted with native bluebells and Spring Corner with daffodils and tulips. Families are invited to take part in our annual bulb planting.

Hedges



Yew



Dog Rose



Blackthorn

Around the Pond



Stratiotes Aloides



Nymphaea 'Gladstoniana'



Frogbit

Grasses and Flowers



Crested Dogtail



Sainfoin



Meadow Buttercup

Memorial Garden



Geranium 'Rozanne'



Amelanchier lamarckii



Miss Willmott's ghost



Burial Ground Guidance

As a true natural burial ground, it is vital that we conserve the habitats and ecosystems of our growing meadows and woodland. We have some rules in place to ensure Old Park Meadow remains a place of natural beauty and is safely and sustainably maintained. Below is a shortened summary of our rules, supplied purely as guidance. For our full Burial Ground Rules, please visit our website or ask for a copy. These are compliant with the rules of the Association of Natural Burial Grounds, of which we are a member. All our work is carried out with the advice of various wildlife programmes and in accordance with best horticultural practices.

When visiting Old Park Meadow, we ask that you adhere to our rules at all times and show consideration for the land and other visitors.

Burials

- No interment is permitted without the appropriate Registrar's certificate
- or Coroner's order for burial, or cremation certificate for interment. All forms must be received by Old Park Meadow at least two working days before the interment is to take place.
- Ashes must be interred and cannot be scattered anywhere on the grounds.
- Embalming is not permitted due to the use of harmful chemicals.
- Most traditional solid wooden coffins (not chipboard) can be buried at Old Park Meadow, as well as those made of willow, seagrass, cardboard, bamboo, and other eco-friendly materials. They must not be decorated with any oil-based paints and as far as possible, the use of preservatives is discouraged.
- We cannot bury metal caskets or zinc-lined coffins and do not permit non-degradable linings or plastic. All handles and name plates must be biodegradable. Linings, and pillows should be made from and stuffed with natural fibres.
- Coffins exceeding 2 metres in length or 65cm in width will incur a £100 surcharge to cover additional grave preparation costs.
- Burial clothes must be made of natural fibres, such as cotton, wool, and linen. They should not include artificial materials such as plastic, synthetic linings, buttons, or zips.
- No exhumations will be permitted under any circumstances except by lawful authority.



Memorials, Flowers, and Tributes

- You are welcome to bring flowers from your garden or a florist. Please visit our website for a list of florists that offer floral tributes for woodland and meadow settings.
- Cut flowers may be laid on graves at the time of the burial and will be collected every Wednesday. Any floral tributes containing oasis, plastic, wire, ribbon, foil, or tape will be removed immediately.
- Ornaments, greetings cards, photographs, balloons, lanterns, toys, vases, and other such items are not permitted and will be removed immediately.
- We do not allow edging, fencing, stones, flowerpots, stakes, ropes, ties, or other such garden items.
- We allow wooden grave markers to be placed on a burial or ash interment plot. Slate plaques can be engraved and placed in our oak memorial frame or on one of our oak posts. All memorials must be purchased through Old Park Meadow.

Ground Maintenance

- No gardening of the woodland, meadows, graves, or any part of the grounds is permitted, including the picking of wildflowers and fungi.
- Grass pathways are cut when necessary and other areas are cut yearly to allow wildlife habitats to remain undisturbed.
- To protect native species, planting of any kind or the scattering of seeds is not permitted.

Site Rules

- Smoking is only permitted in the car park, and we ask that you take your cigarette butts away with you.
- Barbeques are not permitted at Old Park Meadow.
- Dogs must remain on a short lead at all times. Owners assume responsibility for cleaning up after their dog and must be respectful of all burial plots.
- Please respect the privacy of other visitors and ensure that mobile and electronic devices are switched off or set to silent mode.
- You have total control of your service, but any ceremony performed at Old Park Lodge or graveside must be dignified.



Access

- On-site car parking is available with designated spaces for disabled visitors. Neither Old Park Meadow nor its staff can accept any responsibility for loss or damage, however caused.
- No vehicles, including bicycles, are permitted beyond the car park.
- When the office is closed, the main gates (allowing vehicle entry) will be locked. Pedestrian access is available out of hours, from dawn to dusk.

These rules are enforced on a day-to-day basis. Any unauthorised items will be removed swiftly to protect the surrounding wildlife and to preserve the natural beauty of the grounds for all who visit. Old Park Meadow reserve the right to change the rules at any time. If you have further questions about the rules at Old Park Meadow, please get in touch with a member of our team.



Events

We want to make Old Park Lodge available for activities to the benefit of the community. The main hall is an ideal location for yoga classes, choir practices, or art sessions, as it provides a peaceful escape from the outside world. It can also be used for quiet one-off functions, such as tea afternoons, business meetings, or even art exhibitions.

Any quiet activity, that takes place outside of hours reserved for funeral services, and is respectful to the land that surrounds us, can make use of our hall. For more information on hall hire and whether your event would be suitable, please contact us.

Charity Events

Old Park Meadow actively fundraise for St Clare Hospice, Farleigh Hospice, Age UK Essex, Essex Wildlife Trust, and the Essex and Herts Air Ambulance. We regularly hold events throughout the year for charities.

Social Clubs

Our coffee mornings and gardening club are a vital part of the Old Park Meadow community. All are welcome to join at these times:

Coffee Mornings	Every Wednesday between 10am and 12 noon
Gardening Club	Every Wednesday between 9am and 12 noon
Bereavement Cafe	Third Wednesday between 10am and 11:30am

We also hold yoga classes and workshops, death cafes, craft and shopping fairs, and art exhibitions. Dates and information on these events can be found on our social media pages and website.



Contact Us

If you have any questions at all, please do get in touch. Our friendly team will help you with any answers you need. Our aim is always to support you in honouring your loved one and making this difficult process as seamless as possible.

You can also visit our website for lots more useful information about how to organise a funeral and what you can expect on the day.

Visiting Old Park Meadow

You do not need an appointment to visit Old Park Meadow, but it might be wise to call ahead to check we do not have a service on when you are planning to visit. Many visitors come to enjoy the beauty of Old Park Meadow, take a stroll, and enjoy seeing the plants and trees grow over time. If you do stop by for a visit, we recommend wearing sensible footwear.

Getting Here

Old Park Meadow Natural Burial Ground is located on the Dunmow Road (B1008) in North End between Chelmsford and Great Dunmow. We are nine miles from the centre of Chelmsford and three miles from Great Dunmow.

Train: the closest train stations to us are Chelmsford and Stansted Airport, from which you can take a taxi or bus.

Bus: You can take the X30 bus which runs between Stansted Airport and Chelmsford to the bus stop called 'North End adjacent' or 'opposite Black Chapel Lane' – these stops are located near the Butcher's Arms, North End.

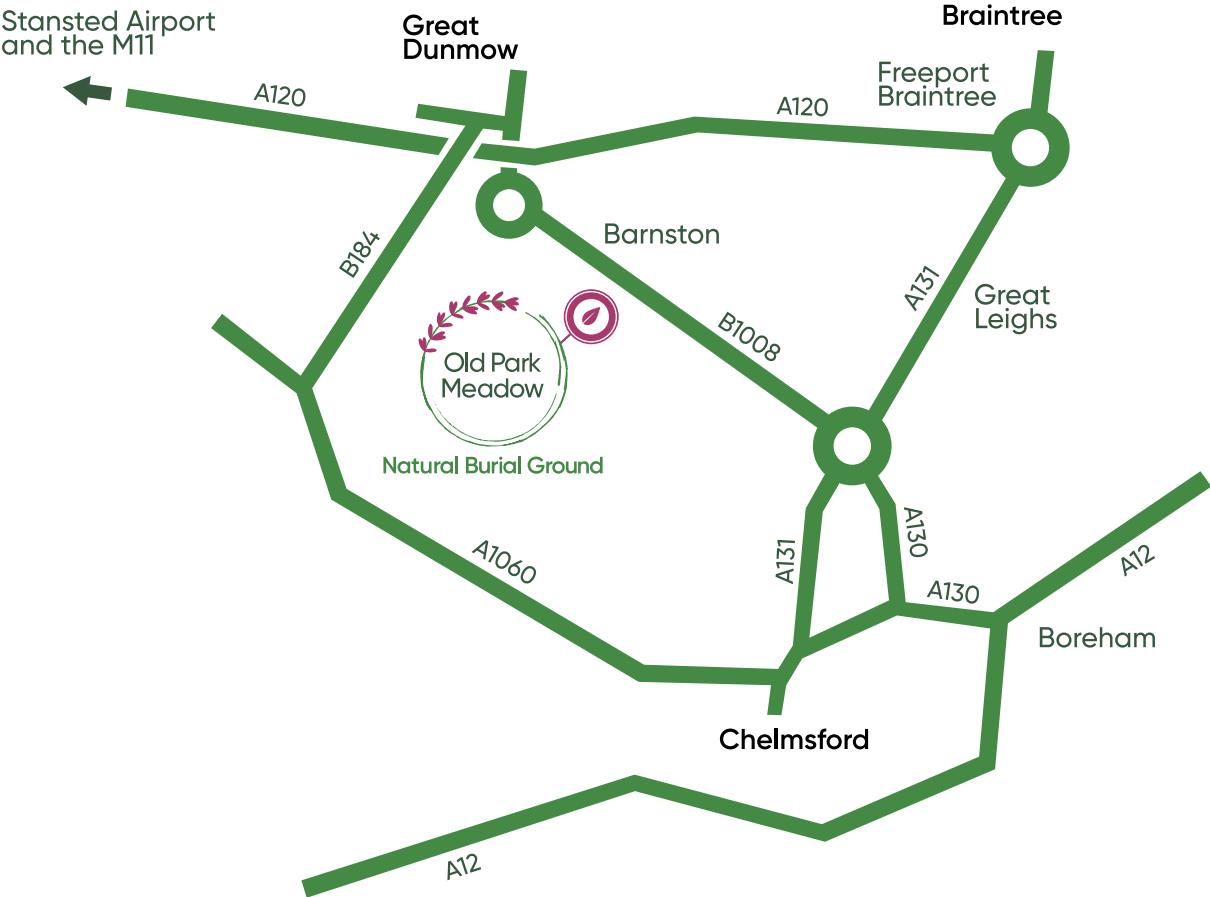
Taxi Services

Barnston Luxury Travel	01371 879922	Old Park Meadow and Great Dunmow
Associated Taxis	01279 655666	Stansted and Bishop's Stortford
Chelmsford City Transport	07952 878308	Specialised wheelchair taxi service in the Chelmsford area
Freedom Taxi	01376 230024	Braintree.

Our Details

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Email: info@oldparkmeadow.co.uk
Website: www.oldparkmeadow.co.uk

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