**Warcop Cemetery Natural Burial Site – Guidance**

**Introduction**

Warcop Parish Council agreed to establish a section of the cemetery dedicated to those families who wish to have a natural burial for their loved ones as an alternative to the traditional lawn grave. It is located at the north western corner and its boundary will be marked by planting of small hedge trees. A small gate will be erected and a sign explaining the nature of this area to visitors.

**Maintaining and Developing the Area**

Trees may be planted with each burial but not on the graves in straight lines. Ideally, we would prefer one tree per three or four burial sites, mainly on the perimeter of the area, so that the area does not become too densely planted. Grass cutting will be kept to a minimum of one or two cuts per year to encourage wild flowers to grow and thus maintain the natural appearance of the area. It will look very different from the rest of the cemetery.

**Coffins and Containers**

Biodegradable coffins, shrouds or other acceptable containers should be used for natural burials whenever possible, but if a standard chipboard coffin is used, we request that non-biodegradable fittings and fixtures are kept to an absolute minimum.

**Grave Design**

The position of each woodland grave will be recorded on a plan, maintained by the Parish Council Clerk. Each grave will be for one burial only and as with all graves in the cemetery, a Grant of Exclusion Right of Burial may be purchased (along with that of adjacent graves) if required. The Exclusive Right of Burial will be for a period of fifty years, as per the lawn area of the cemetery.

Cremated remains (ashes) may be interred in an existing grave or scattered in a designated area by arrangement.

**Memorials**

The placing of memorials on grave spaces is not permitted. Families and friends may plant native flowers and bulbs on a grave space – e.g. primroses, violets, wood anemones and celandines, which are in keeping with a woodland setting.

The placing of flowers and wreaths will only be permitted for a limited period at the time of the funeral. Memorial plaques may be purchased for placing on the perimeter wall near to the grave where practicable.

**Funeral Arrangements**

Graves are not set aside in separate areas for the use of specific religions, faiths or those with no beliefs. The families or executors may choose to use the services of a funeral director or make the funeral arrangements themselves. The creation of a natural woodland burial area will provide environmental benefits for future generations and nature will take care of the grave areas.

Further information or advice can be obtained from the Parish Clerk, 017683 41102 or Eden District Council’s Bereavement Services Office, Mansion House, Penrith or [www.eden.gov.uk](http://www.eden.gov.uk)