

Policy on Monks Wood as a place for memorials

Preamble

Nettleham Woodland Trust (NWT) is delighted that Ashing Lane Nature Reserve has developed so well since the first trees were planted in February 2009 and has become a special place for the many people that visit.

This document was first approved in autumn 2019 and updated in autumn 2022. It has been agreed by the NWT management committee, so that we can respond quickly and consistently to expressions of interest. It is available on our website and made available to anyone who asks about these matters. It provides the basis of any conversation between NWT and any enquirers.

Statements of practice

Restrictions

This policy only applies to Monks Wood, for which NWT has a management agreement with Lincolnshire Wildlife Trust, the landowners, until ca 2134.

Memorial/sponsored trees

There are a modest number of sponsored trees among the 20,000 planted at Monks Wood. A memorial garden near the entrance was planned from the start, and here there are both individual trees and Jubilee Walk (60 trees, planted 2012). Looking after the memorial garden trees has been problematic, however, so NWT will continue to maintain the existing ones but will not accept new commitments.

Cathedral Copse (120 trees, planted 2017) in South Wood was also planted on a sponsored basis and is being managed to prioritise the growth of straight oaks for cathedral roof timbers.

The memorial garden trees are recorded, and NWT keeps a complete list of all sponsored tree donors.

Monks Wood is primarily a nature reserve and is managed to maximise biodiversity, whilst encouraging public access. If people plant their own memorial trees in the reserve without permission those trees will be subject to any management decisions made by NWT, e.g. removing inappropriate species, thinning, coppicing.

Memorial plaques

The existing plaques in the memorial garden are sometimes damaged when the area is mowed, therefore NWT has decided not to allow any further plaques in Monks Wood.

Memorial benches

There are a number of memorial benches and picnic tables in Monks Wood, and they are greatly appreciated. NWT will consider any offers of further benches. But due to the time and financial resources required to maintain some of the existing benches, it will be the responsibility of the donor to maintain any new benches. And, as part of our health and safety responsibility, any judged to be in a dangerous condition will have to be removed.

The scattering of ashes

In the UK there's no explicit law against scattering ashes, as long as you get permission from the person who owns the land. NWT is therefore obliged to act in agreement with the landowners, Lincolnshire Wildlife Trust, in regard to this and will consider occasional requests.

Some families have scattered ashes of loved ones whilst planting memorial trees at Monks Wood. Others have asked permission to scatter ashes elsewhere, but we cannot guarantee that locations will be undisturbed over the years, either by plant growth, wildlife or woodland management activities. Ashes must never be scattered into the areas of water.

Green burials

Monks Wood will not be used to provide green burials.

Regular and one-off donations

NWT is a registered charity, run entirely by volunteers. It receives annual funding via the Forestry Commission for woodland creation, but this will cease by 2027 and we are looking for alternative sources of regular income to replace this such as the NWT 200 Club. Our regular running costs - e.g. insurance for public liability and equipment, maintenance and petrol for power tools, bank charges – amount to about £2000.

We often apply for grants for particular items such as display boards and equipment, and ran crowdfunding appeals for the Monks Oak circular bench and the wildlife tower.

If you would like to make contributions to our regular costs, or to a specific project, please get in touch with us to discuss options.