



St. Margaret's Lee Scavenger Hunt

Why Burial Grounds?

There are over 20,000 burial grounds in England and Wales, ranging from small rural medieval churchyards to large Victorian city cemeteries, spanning different cultures, religions and centuries.

Burial grounds can be remnants of the landscape that once surrounded them, home to plants, animals and insects now rare in our wider countryside. In urban areas they can be havens for wildlife, peaceful spaces for people and provide essential green spaces in built-up areas.

Burial grounds also encapsulate the history of communities, they tell us about fashion, status and immigration, of lives long-lived and those tragically short. They are places full of stories.

Caring for God's Acre works nationally to support groups and individuals to investigate, care for, and enjoy these unique sites.



Why this pack?

This guide will lead you through your first visits to burial grounds and teach you to recognise some of the wildlife and built features in them. Once you can recognise some species and features, we will show you how to record them.

A 'biological record' is a recorded sighting of wildlife. Experts need these records to understand how wildlife is spread across the UK. Each county has a centre for recording biodiversity and this allows us to understand how widespread species are, as well as see where populations are increasing or declining. You can be a part of this too, it is important to record common species as well as rare ones to give a full picture. Keep reading for more information.

The built heritage of burial grounds is important for archaeologists and historians. By studying the built features, we can learn about attitudes to death, changes in belief, family structures and social status. The styles and materials of monuments and graves track the development of the arts and local styles.

We hope this guide will spark your interest for burial grounds and wildlife in general. Each section of this pack gives suggestions on where to go if you want to find out more.

Nature

Tick the box if you find the item



Buttercup



Daisy

Grass species can be hard to identify. Ideally a burial ground will have several different types of grasses at a range of heights rather than a single species that dominates, like a playing field. Why not see how many different types of grass head you can find? Here are some examples.

Grasses



Yorkshire Fog

Meadow Foxtail

Crested Dogtail

Cocksfoot

Leaves & Trees

The easiest way to identify trees is when they are in leaf. Try to match the shapes of the leaves here with the ones you can find.



Ash trees have sets of leaves in 3–6 opposite pairs with an additional leaf at the end of each set. The smooth bark is green-grey lightening with age developing shallow tears over time. Really old ash trees have bark similar to oak. In winter ash has distinctive black buds.



Oak has long leaves with a distinctive lobed shape. Its bark is ridged and rough. The trees bear acorns in the autumn and in winter the twigs look like knuckles.



Beech has shiny leaves with hairs at the edges and a smooth bark. In winter it has red-brown leaf buds with a crisscross pattern.



Hazel is often a bushy tree which will grow back with multiple stems if it has been pruned or cut down. The leaves are round with toothed edges, hairy underneath, and pointed at the tip. The bark is almost shiny with marks around the stems.



Holly keeps its tough and shiny leaves all year round. They are spiky on young trees but smooth on old trees. The bark is smooth and thin with lots of brown warts. Holly has red, poisonous berries.



Hawthorn is generally a thorny, bushy tree with small leaves that unfurl bright green in early spring. The bark is smooth and grey on young trees with narrow cracks running down the stem developing as the tree ages.



Sycamore has leaves with five lobes (palmate), the stalks on young leaves are red. The bark is silver-grey and develops cracks and large peeling scales as it ages.

TREES

Find out more about trees, search for The Woodland Trust online.



Draw a picture or write the names of any leaves you find here:

Leaves & Trees

Tick the box if you find the item



Can you find
this tree?



And this one?



Leaves & Trees

Tick the box if you find the item



Can you find
any of these
palm trees?



Burial Ground

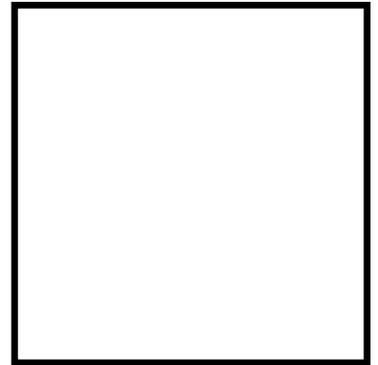


Lychgates

Lychgates are a roofed porch-like structure over a gate to a churchyard, often built of wood and were a key part of burial practices. They were meeting places and shelters for the people bringing a corpse for burial, and for the priest to receive the body. 'Lych' comes from the Old English 'lich', meaning corpse. As these were largely wooden structures many have been restored and replaced or disappeared over time.

The Lychgate

Tick the box if you find the item

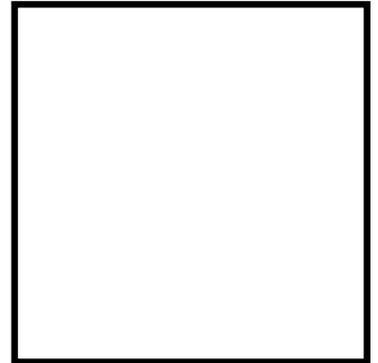


Sundials

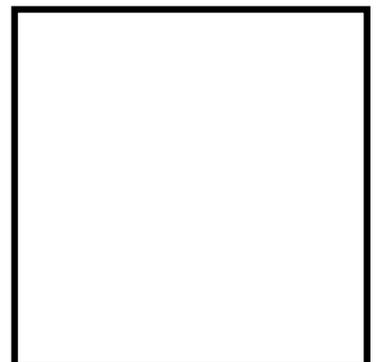
Most medieval churches would have had a sundial. These might be attached to the church, usually above the porch or on the south face of the tower. Its main purpose was to ensure that the bell was rung at the correct time to mark daytime canonical hours (certain times of the day for prayers). In many places, the sundial was the only reliable public timepiece until the early 19th century when sundials were replaced by church clocks.



The Sundial



The West Door



Burial Ground

Tick the box if you find the item



Can you find a
gravestone with
a cross on it?



The North Door



Rector's
Memorial
Cross

Churchyard

Draw a picture of your favourite thing in the churchyard:

