



Trustees' Annual Report for the period

From	Period start date			To	Period end date		
	Day 01	Month 02	Year 2020		Day 31	Month 01	Year 2021

Section A Reference and administration details

Charity name	Exeter Dissenters' Graveyard Trust
Other names charity is known by	EDGT
Registered charity number (if any)	1159449
Charity's principal address	21 The Mint, Exeter, Devon
Postcode	EX4 3BL

Names of the charity trustees who manage the charity

	Trustee name	Office (if any)	Dates acted if not for whole year	Name of person (or body) entitled to appoint trustee (if any)
1	Paul Chant	Secretary		
2	Peter Dare	Chairman		
3	Ian Varndell	Treasurer		
4	Gordon Read			
5	Nigel Fitzhugh			
6	Sally Dyer			
7	Jane Marston			
8	Yvonne Hensman			
9	Claire Rudkins			
10	Cathy Moran			
11	Stephen Wills			
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Names of the trustees for the charity, if any, (for example, any custodian trustees)

Name	Dates acted if not for whole year

Names and addresses of advisers (Optional information)

Type of adviser	Name	Address
Independent examiner	Thompson Jenner LLP	1 Colleton Crescent, Exeter, EX2 4DG
Bank	Co-operative Bank plc	Delf House, Southway, Skelmersdale, WN8 6NY

Name of chief executive or names of senior staff members (Optional information)

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Section B Structure, governance and management

Description of the charity's trusts

Type of governing document
(eg. trust deed, constitution)

Foundation model constitution

How the charity is constituted
(eg. trust, association, company)

Charitable Incorporated Organisation

Trustee selection methods
(eg. appointed by, elected by)

Appointed for a three-year term by the current Board of Trustees by resolution at a properly convened meeting of the Board.

Additional governance issues (Optional information)

You **may choose** to include additional information, where relevant, about:

- policies and procedures adopted for the induction and training of trustees;
- the charity's organisational structure and any wider network with which the charity works;
- relationship with any related parties;
- trustees' consideration of major risks and the system and procedures to manage them.

Board of Trustees

The initial Board was composed of members representing several heritage and community associations operating in the county of Devon. Close relationships were therefore formed with those associations, all of whom contributed seed funding for the early feasibility work. Whilst close working relationships still exist with the founding associations, new trustees are invited on the basis of their experience and appropriate expertise.

Induction and training of trustees

New trustees are sought from the local community on the basis of appropriate expertise as required by the Board or have a demonstrated interest in the Objects of the Trust. The charity trustees make available to each new charity trustee, on or before his or her first appointment: (a) a copy of the current version of our constitution; and (b) a copy of the CIO's latest Trustees' Annual Report and statement of accounts.

Section C Objectives and activities

Summary of the objects of the charity set out in its governing document

To assist in the restoration, preservation, improvement, maintenance and conservation of Exeter Dissenters' Graveyard and to advance education in the graveyard and an understanding of the history and heritage of the graveyard and the people who were buried there.

Summary of the main activities undertaken for the public benefit in relation to these objects (include within this section the statutory declaration that trustees have had regard to the guidance issued by the Charity Commission on public benefit)

Improvement of the site allowing access to members of the public
For many years the site known as the Exeter Dissenters' Graveyard was derelict and was targeted by fly-tippers and substance abusers. The graveyard lies just outside Exeter city centre in an area of historic significance - the Southernhay and The Friars Conservation Area, next to a major hotel. It was an eye-sore for locals and visitors alike and was a constant target for developers.

The principal work of the Trust is now to maintain the graveyard, conduct research into the people buried there and their families, and carry out repair work where appropriate.

Research

The Research Group continues to investigate individuals and families associated with the Graveyard. Over 105 family biographies (90 in 2019-20) have been uploaded to the Trust's dedicated website (www.edgt.org.uk).

Website and social media

Our website (www.edgt.org.uk) is regularly updated with information about the project as well as photographs of the work and data about the people buried at the site. EDGT also operates a Twitter account (@ExeterDGT) and a Facebook page (@exeterdgt) which are regularly updated.

Education

The global coronavirus pandemic impacted the planned programme of work and opening of the graveyard from March 2020. More information appears below.

One paper on the history of the graveyard was published in 2020: Varndell, I.M. The creation of a burial ground for Protestant Dissenters in Georgian Exeter. *Journal of the Devon Gardens Trust*, 6: 29-35, 2020.

One of our trustees (Dr Ian Varndell) gave a talk "A memorial landscape: Exeter Dissenters' Graveyard" - via the video-conferencing platform Zoom: 1 December 2020 – for Devon Gardens Trust.

Public benefit and EDGT trustees

The trustees have regard to the guidance on public benefit issued by the Charity Commissioner and the trustees confirm that they have had regard to public benefit guides PB1, PB2 and PB3 issued by the Charity Commission when making decisions to which they are relevant.

Additional details of objectives and activities (Optional information)

You **may choose** to include further statements, where relevant, about:

- policy on grantmaking;
- policy programme related investment;
- contribution made by volunteers.

Volunteers

The EDGT has no employees and relies entirely on volunteers to plan, manage, undertake and report on the work of the charity, and maintain the site using paid contractors only where specialist knowledge, skills or equipment are required. Since 2014 volunteers have undertaken duties ranging from clearance work, building, pointing, stone repair and gardening to research work, stewarding and charity administration.

Summary of the main achievements of the charity during the year**Restoration**

The principal restoration of the Graveyard was completed in 2018/19.

Whilst the main emphasis for the trustees is the maintenance of the graveyard, increase its exposure to members of the public and ensure that fundraising meets the priorities for improvement works.

As part of the National Heritage Lottery Fund's response to the Coronavirus pandemic the trustees applied for, and secured, an emergency grant of £3300 to purchase protective equipment, new marquees for Open Days, and materials for the relaying of the main path. The trustees were then invited to apply for additional funding under the HLF's 'Recovery and Reopening' Fund and secured an additional grant of £9600. The main purpose of this funding is to create and install permanent signage in the graveyard using QR codes displayed on bespoke supports, linked to educational material on the EDGT website. An example is included below. The grant also enabled the purchase of three tablets that can be used in the graveyard by volunteer stewards to show visitors documentary materials without needing to have paper-based folders on site.



QR code linked to Memorial 1.

The ground-mounted stakes have been fabricated by a Devon-based blacksmith and the plaques engraved with the QR codes will be rolled out during 2021. The QR codes were successfully beta-tested during an Open Day held in September 2020.

Research

The Research Group has continued to expand the quantity and accuracy of its biographical database.

The Research Group met four times in 2020 and shared a lot of data electronically.

On-line Activity

The website continues to report progress on the Project and publicise events. The Trust has a presence on Facebook and Twitter.

Visitor numbers are monitored and the most popular page visited is Social History which includes output from the EDGT's active Research Group.

Section E

Financial review

Brief statement of the charity's policy on reserves

EDGT aspires to accumulate reserves to the level of three years' operating expenditure. Whilst this report refers to the financial year to the end of January 2021, the Trustees are cognisant of the potential detrimental effect of HM Government's restrictions, imposed because of the COVID-19 global pandemic, on the long-term finances of the Trust. This will be kept under review during the current financial year.

Details of any funds materially in deficit

Further financial review details (Optional information)

You **may choose** to include additional information, where relevant about:

- the charity's principal sources of funds (including any fundraising);
- how expenditure has supported the key objectives of the charity;
- investment policy and objectives including any ethical investment policy adopted.

Principal sources of funding

Grants from the National Heritage Lottery Fund totalling £12,900 were received in the financial year. Booklet sales yielded £67 in the year.

Section F

Other optional information

Section G

Declaration

The trustees declare that they have approved the trustees' report above.

Signed on behalf of the charity's trustees

Signature(s)



Full name(s)

Ian Michael VARNDELL

Robert Paul CHANT

Position (eg Secretary, Chair, etc)

Hon. Treasurer

Hon. Secretary

Date

25 May 2021