

Friends of Durham Woodland Cemetery

Annual Report 2020-21

Introduction

Durham Woodland Cemetery is accessible from the South Road Cemetery and Crematorium. The glades provide space for natural burials and the woodland is a pleasant place for members of the public to walk, following a burial or during a visit.

The Friends of Durham Woodland Cemetery is a Charitable Incorporated Organisation with a voting membership in addition to the charity trustees. The constitution provides for members or trustees to appoint new trustees.

Alan Ashworth, Stephen Hare (Chairman), Matthew Jones and Stephen Robson served as trustees for the full year.

Role

The role of the Friends is to:

1. Promote the conservation, protection, and improvement of Durham Woodland Cemetery.
2. Raise public awareness of the site and promote its importance as a conservation area.
3. Promote use of the site in the interests of social welfare for people in Durham and the surrounding area.

Activities

The site is owned by Durham County Council. The Friends have agreed standards with the Council for routine maintenance of the site as well as protection of the site when burials take place. The Council has agreed to take responsibility for cutting the grass. Friends monitor the site and provide feedback to the Council about remedial work required to meet the agreed standards.

During the year, Stephen Robson provided feedback to the Council about some problems concerning lack of respect for the graves at the site by maintenance teams. Following a visit to the site with Council representatives, some improvements were made, and it was agreed to communicate monthly.

The Council placed signage boards at the site during the year. Stephen Robson and Alan Ashworth contributed to the design of the signage. As well as providing general details and rules for using the site, the signage provides information about the approach to management of the burial glades and meadows during the seasons, highlighting structural diversity and habitat for wildlife.

The Friends receive enquiries from members of the public. During the year, Joyce Gregory, Matthew Jones and Stephen Robson provided advice on matters such as plaques and the planting of trees and flowers at the site, and made referrals to the Council, as appropriate. The Friends had no direct involvement with funerals or burials during the year.

All the activities of the Friends were for the public benefit.

Making a difference

The Friends provided help and advice for people at a difficult time. This went beyond meeting a need for essential information about the site. The Friends provided a personal touch, showing kindness, respect, and caring for the bereaved.

Financial Position

The Charity is financially strong, with reserves of £11,875 at the year end. This includes a grant of £10,000 which the members have ring-fenced for a memorial project.

The Charity aims to ensure sufficient cash is held to cover known commitments at the year end. The year-end balance, excluding the ring-fenced amount, was more than sufficient.

The trustees thank Keith Gregory for maintaining financial records and preparing the accounts.

Operation of the Charity

The constitution of the Charity requires a minimum of 6 trustees and only 4 were in place during the year.

Efforts to recruit trustees were unsuccessful during the year.

The operation and administration of the Charity was generally impeded by the coronavirus pandemic and lockdowns.

Plans for the future

The recruitment of at least 2 additional trustees was identified as a priority to meet the requirements of the constitution.

A need for further volunteers was also identified, to help with administration, site maintenance, development of the website and completing returns to the Charity Commission.

Members agreed that the grant of £10,000 received during the year would be used for a memorial of the site. The design and form of the memorial was to be decided.

FRIENDS OF DURHAM WOODLAND CEMETERY

**INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT
1ST APRIL 2020 TO 31ST MARCH 2021**

INCOME

DCC GRANT	10000.00	
DONATIONS	440.00	
GIFT AID	110.00	
TOTAL INCOME		10550.00

EXPENDITURE

GROUNDS MAINTENANCE	52.34	
POSTAGE AND STATIONERY	0.00	
INSURANCE	337.81	
TOTAL EXPENDITURE		390.15

NET PROFIT **£10,159.85**

BALANCE SHEET AT 31ST MARCH 2021

CURRENT ASSETS

CASH AT BANK	11844.83	
SUNDRY DEBTORS	30.00	
TOTAL ASSETS		11874.83

REPRESENTED BY

PROFIT AND LOSS ACCOUNT	11874.83
-------------------------	----------