

Friends of Durham Woodland Cemetery

Annual Report 2021-22

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

Durham County Council owns the Durham Woodland Cemetery and is responsible for maintaining the site to agreed standards. The Friends monitor the site and provide feedback to the Council about remedial work required to meet these standards.

The Friends had partial access to the site during the Covid lockdown. Continuous monitoring was possible from December 2021 and the Friends provided feedback to the Council about damage to the site during burials and routine maintenance.

Stephen Robson and Alan Ashworth maintained and improved the site by removing four trees to make safe after storm damage; planting daffodil bulbs; growing self-seeding trees in pots in preparation for planting; using excess clay for landscaping; and tidying and picking up litter.

Signage boards provide general details and rules for using the site as well as information about the approach to management of the burial glades and meadows during the seasons, highlighting structural diversity and habitat for wildlife. Stephen

Robson and Alan Ashworth carried out maintenance of the signage following storm damage.

The Friends had no direct involvement with funerals or burials during the year. The Friends were unable to hire out a lodge at the site due to the lack of hot water, an essential requirement for hand washing following Covid.

During the year, Joyce Gregory, Matthew Jones and Stephen Robson provided advice to members of the public on matters such as plaques and the planting of trees and flowers at the site, and made referrals to the Council, as appropriate.

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

Making a difference

The Friends offered help and advice at a difficult time. The approach provided a personal touch, showing kindness, respect, and caring for the bereaved.

Financial Position

The Charity is financially strong, with reserves of £11913.64 at the year end. This includes £10,000 which is 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 provided a pool of candidates and a further 5 trustees were appointed just after the year end.

The coronavirus pandemic and lockdown impeded the operation and administration of the Charity to December 2021.

Plans for the future

The memorial project was identified as a priority for the coming year. The design and form of the memorial was to be determined.

A need to review the operation and administration of the Charity following the recruitment of new trustees was also recognised. Refreshing arrangements for communication with the Council was identified as a priority.

FRIENDS OF DURHAM WOODLAND CEMETERY

**INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT
1ST APRIL 2021 TO 31ST MARCH 2022**

INCOME

DONATIONS	385.00	
GIFT AID	96.25	
TOTAL INCOME		481.25

EXPENDITURE

POSTAGE AND STATIONERY	102.59	
INSURANCE	339.85	
TOTAL EXPENDITURE		442.44
NET SURPLUS		£38.81

BALANCE SHEET AT 31ST MARCH 2022

CURRENT ASSETS

CASH AT BANK	11867.39	
SUNDRY DEBTORS	46.25	
TOTAL ASSETS		11913.64

REPRESENTED BY

SURPLUS B/F	11874.83
ADD SURPLUS YE 31/3/22	38.81
SURPLUS C/F	11913.64