

**FRIENDS OF HYDE PARK CEMETERY  
MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING  
TUESDAY 17<sup>TH</sup> NOVEMBER 2015**

**1. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS**

Richard Bell, FoHPC Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting and then summarised the format of the meeting.

**2. APOLOGIES**

Sheila Dilks, Phil Dilks, Patricia Johns.

**3. GUEST SPEAKER**

Pat McLaughlin gave an interesting talk entitled 'South Yorkshire's Great Houses'. Questions were asked during the presentation by members of the audience and the talk was well received.

**4. CHAIRMAN'S REPORT (2014/2015)**

Read by Richard Bell and is attached at the end of these notes.

**5 TREASURER'S REPORT**

Financial Statements for the period 6<sup>th</sup> April 2014 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2015 were circulated at the beginning of the meeting and are attached hereto. A signed and bound copy examined by our accountants was available.

**6 COMMITTEE 2015/2016**

The positions for 2015/2016 are as follows:

Chair – Vacant

Vice chair – Vacant

Treasurer – Margaret Bark

Secretary – Helen Slade

Committee Members – Richard Bell, Andria Johns, Sheila Dilks, Phil Dilks.

Future meetings will be chaired on an ad-hoc basis until a permanent chairperson is appointed. In order to facilitate an

appointment, individuals are welcome to join the committee, subject to approval, throughout the year.

## **7 APPOINTMENT OF AUDITOR FOR 2015/2016**

Ashworth Bailey Limited, Chartered Accountants appointed to examine the 2015/16 accounts.

Action - APPROVED

## **8 ANY OTHER BUSINESS AND QUESTIONS**

Attendee of the AGM Major G.Berry (who no longer lives in the area) shared his appreciation for the grave-finder service, declaring that he finds it very useful. Also, he shared his thoughts that the correspondence that is sent out is extremely informative.

AJ expressed her thanks to Richard Bell on behalf of all the committee and FoHPC, for all his hard work as chairman these past 7 years.

**MEETING CLOSED**

**Friends of Hyde Park Cemetery**  
**Chairman's Report for 2014/15 and up to the current date**

I am pleased to report to this AGM on activities undertaken and progress made by the Friends since the 2014 AGM.

At the AGM held on 18 November 2014, the following Officers and Committee Members were elected:

• Chair – Richard Bell	• Committee – Andria Johns
• Vice-Chair – Margaret Herbert	• Committee – Sheila North
• Treasurer – Margaret Bark	• Committee – Helen Slade
• Secretary – Robert Wise	• Committee – Vacancy
	• Committee – Vacancy
	• Committee – Vacancy

In June 2015 Margaret Herbert resigned from the committee due to other commitments. In September, Sheila North gave notice that she would not be standing for re-election. It was at almost the same time that Robert Wise moved house to Shrewsbury, thus precluding him from any significant involvement with the Friends in future. This meant that for the past few weeks the committee has, in effect, had six vacancies.

I should like to thank Margaret, Sheila, Robert and, indeed, the rest of the committee for their sterling work over the past year. Their efforts have been all the more noteworthy because of the vacancies that have existed in the committee.

In spite of the depleted number of active volunteers, the past year has seen excellent progress in meeting our group's objectives.

Practical work undertaken at the cemetery since the 2014 AGM included the continuation of our **Monthly Working Mornings**. Litter picking, other tidying, and project-related work have been key activities. We also tried another Working Evening in August, although this attracted only the same people who participate in the Saturday sessions. 49 volunteer shifts were worked during the monthly Working Mornings in 2014/15. This is down on previous years, but more recently numbers seem to have stabilised. As the most tangible way of helping to improve the cemetery, I would repeat the appeal that I made last year, encouraging everyone to make the effort to take part whenever they can. It really is worthwhile.

We thank Adrian Welch Glass & Glazing for continuing to support our Working Mornings by allowing us to store equipment and use the toilet facilities in their premises.

In addition to the more routine work, the past year has seen the greatest level of project activity in the Friends' history, with the following significant projects completed.

In late 2014, we obtained a Community First Grant to set up a **Tree Trail** in the cemetery, including new information signs and leaflets. We selected twelve specimen trees for the trail, which was formally launched in June. To mark the launch, we employed chain-saw sculptor Leon Clemitchaw to carve two pieces, a barn owl and a miners' lamp, both of which are on permanent display in the cemetery.

Also in late-2014, we launched an appeal to raise funds for the restoration of the graves of famous locomotive engineer Patrick Stirling, and two of his sons. The **Stirling Appeal** seemed to strike a chord with many individuals and organisations, such that we were able to put the work in hand in early Spring. All the stonework was cleaned free-of-charge by members of the Victoria Cross Trust and the repairs carried out by a local memorial mason. The Appeal also funded the purchase and installation of two new marble crosses, as the original ones were not fit for repair. The restored graves were re-dedicated at a special ceremony held on May 3<sup>rd</sup>, with Patrick Stirling's great-great-grandson and great-great-granddaughter in attendance. Also present were the Rt Hon Rosie Winterton MP, Mayor Ros Jones and many others.

After three years of allowing the **Memorial Meadow** to develop naturally, with only limited success, we decided this year to introduce a mix of annual and perennial wildflowers, to add more colour. With the help of Doncaster Council's grounds maintenance team, who cultivated the ground for us, we purchased and sowed a large quantity of seed in late-May. We were rewarded with a more colourful display of flowers during the summer. We also installed two information signs to explain the significance of the Memorial Meadow.

Two groups of young people, working on the **National Citizen Service** scheme during the summer holidays, undertook great work, including cultivating and planting-up the small garden adjacent to the main entrance. We added a woodchip mulch at last Saturday's Working Morning;

**Other improvements** were carried out by Doncaster Council, most notably the surfacing of many more paths, throughout the cemetery.

All the above practical work is in addition to the ongoing maintenance carried out by the Doncaster Council grounds maintenance staff. They continue to keep the site tidy by regular grass-cutting, emptying the bins, weed-killing and similar tasks.

The Friends have continued to produce information and raise the profile of Hyde Park Cemetery through a range of activities.

- **Four guided heritage walks** have been hosted in 2015, with a good level of attendance each time. They included a walk '*Celebrating Democracy*' on 14<sup>th</sup> June, to mark the 800<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Magna Carta. In return for hosting that event we were sent a yew tree sapling, propagated from one of the ancient Hambledon yews which were around at the time of the Magna Carta. The sapling is now growing in the cemetery.
- We held our third annual **Bat Walk** in July, with the help of the South Yorkshire Bat Group. This walk attracted 31 people, including many children;
- The **Friend's website** has now had over 17,000 visitors, with numbers in 2014/15 37% higher than in 2013/14. We still hope to re-design the website in the foreseeable future, but our hopes of achieving this in 2015 have not come to fruition;
- **Quarterly newsletters** continue to be sent out to all members and other interested parties. Weldricks Pharmacy once again agreed to sponsor the hard-copy newsletters and we are very grateful for their support. We rationalised the distribution list this year, removing from the hard-copy list all those people who failed to respond to three separate requests to confirm that they still wanted to receive it. That has reduced the cost of the newsletter significantly;
- **The Friends exhibited** at the Doncaster CVS Awards last December, the Doncaster & District Heritage Association Local History Fair in May, and at the Family History Society Fair in September. As in previous years, while our presence seems to generate plenty of interest, the fairs have not noticeably increased our pool of active volunteers;
- We continue to use **Twitter and Facebook** to provide updates on our activities;
- We have provided four **illustrated talks** about the cemetery in the past year.
- After the success of our previous **Family Halloween Walks**, we had hoped to run a similar event this year. However, our depleted number of active volunteers meant that we were not confident of being able to provide a good quality and, above all, a safe event, so we reluctantly decided not to proceed.

Other significant matters to be noted are as follows:

- The Friends' **Grave Finder Service**, providing information about burials and graves in return for a fee, is increasingly popular. The Grave Finder Service has earned the group almost £1000 since it began. The past year's enquiries have included two from Australia;
- Several weeks ago we submitted a bid to Heritage Lottery Fund to provide a **War Memorial** commemorating all 109 servicemen who died as a result of the two World Wars and are buried in Hyde Park Cemetery. Just this morning we learnt that our bid, as submitted, was not successful. However, we may have an option to revise the bid and try once again.
- Doncaster Council is progressing a scheme to repair the stone wall along the **New Street boundary**, where it was badly damaged by the roots of the Black Poplar trees that were taken down last year. The Friends are intending to fund the provision of new railings in part of that boundary, using money that has been generously donated to us by donors who wish to remain anonymous. We are in discussion with Bereavement Services and the Conservation and Planning

Officers about appropriate and affordable designs for the railings. We expect work to go ahead in 2016.

- The **Cemetery Lodge** was sold by Doncaster Council to Adrian Welch last year. Work on its external restoration is almost complete and internal work has begun. Also the former entrance arch to the cemetery has been underpinned and is currently being restored. We are grateful to Adrian for investing in the site. The restoration will improve both the visitor experience and the security of the site.

The Friends have once again benefitted from, and are grateful for, the support and encouragement given by, amongst others:

- Amanda Carr and her team at Doncaster Council Bereavement Services;
- Councillor Glyn Jones, Deputy Mayor of Doncaster;
- Central Area Safer Neighbourhood Team;
- Adrian Welch Glass & Glazing;
- The Victoria Cross Trust;
- Weldricks Pharmacy;
- The Doncaster & District Heritage Association;
- The Doncaster 1914-18 Project;
- The National Federation of Cemetery Friends;
- Mark Rowing and the team at Club 39;
- And all the volunteers who have contributed to activities throughout the year.

Finally, as you will be aware, this is my last meeting as Chairman of the Friends of Hyde Park Cemetery, after almost seven years in the role. If there is one area where I feel that I have failed during that time, in spite of my best efforts, it is in increasing the number of volunteers who actively engage in our activities and projects. Having said that, we have achieved a very great deal in the last seven years and I look forward to supporting the Executive Officers of the future in achieving even more.

*Richard Bell*

*17 November 2015*

**FRIENDS OF HYDE PARK CEMETERY**

**FINANCIAL STATEMENTS**

**FOR THE PERIOD 6<sup>TH</sup> APRIL 2014  
TO 31<sup>ST</sup> MARCH 2015**

**Friends of Hyde Park Cemetery**

**Income and Expenditure Account**

**for the period 6<sup>th</sup> April 2014 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2015**

**Unrestricted Funds**

		<b>2015</b>	<b>2014</b>
<b>Income</b>			
Donations			
Weldricks	300		
Flowers	65		
General	<u>200</u>		
		565	93
Events			
DMBC - Halloween	306		
Talk to Cantley Methodist Ladies	<u>30</u>		
		336	207
Walks		168	123
Gravefinder		<u>230</u>	<u>160</u>
		1,299	583
<b>Expenditure</b>			
Meeting expenses			
Speaker	-		
Room hire	<u>-</u>		
		-	82
Memberships			
DDHA	10		
NFCF	20		
Club 39	<u>9</u>		
		39	40
Insurance		197	197
General office expenses		31	173
Newsletter		295	300
Web hosting		-	208
Stand at fair		10	-
Repairs - Notice Board (New Street entrance)	90		
- Gates - Green Dyke Lane - Gold lettering	<u>78</u>		
		168	132
Plants		-	46
Flowers		38	46
Halloween event		306	177
Donation		20	30
Accountancy		<u>60</u>	<u>60</u>
		1,164	1,491
Income over Expenditure		<u>135</u>	<u>(908)</u>



**Friends of Hyde Park Cemetery**

**Income and Expenditure Account**

**for the period 6<sup>th</sup> April 2014 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2015**

**Restricted Funds**

	<b>2015</b>	<b>2014</b>
<b>Income</b>		
Donations		
Gates - Green Dyke Lane	-	2,700
Former Woodfield TARA	1,826	-
Community Development Foundation Grant	1,974	-
Stirling Graves Restoration Appeal	<u>1,156</u>	<u>-</u>
	<b>4,956</b>	<b>2,700</b>
<b>Expenditure</b>		
Gates - Green Dyke Lane	2,700	-
Community Development Foundation Grant	1,912	-
Community Development Foundation Grant – refund	<u>62</u>	<u>-</u>
	<b><u>4,674</u></b>	<b><u>-</u></b>
<b>Income over Expenditure</b>	<b><u>282</u></b>	<b><u>2,700</u></b>

**Friends of Hyde Park Cemetery**

**Balance Sheet**

**31<sup>st</sup> March 2015**

	<b>2015</b>	<b>2014</b>
<b>Current assets</b>		
Cash at bank	3,957	3,540
<b>Current liabilities</b>		
Creditors and accruals	<u>60</u>	<u>60</u>
<b>Net current assets</b>	<u>3,897</u>	<u>3,480</u>
<b>Represented by</b>		
Accumulated Restricted Funds	2,982	2,700
Accumulated Unrestricted Funds	<u>915</u>	<u>780</u>
	<u>3,897</u>	<u>3,480</u>