



FRIENDS OF HIGHGATE CEMETERY TRUST

Annual Review 2021-22

This review covers the financial year 1 September 2021 to 31 August 2022
Printed April 2023

FRIENDS OF HIGHGATE CEMETERY TRUST

Registered Office Highgate Cemetery, Swain's Lane, London N6 6PJ

Telephone 020 8340 1834

Web www.highgatecemetery.org

Company Number 3157806 **Charity Number** 1058392

People

Vice Presidents

Derek Barratt, Ian Kelly

Chair

Martin Adeney re-appointed 29 July 2020

Trustees

Doreen Aislabie	re-elected 29 July 2020
Katherine Baldwin	re-elected 6 July 2021
Alice Brown	appointed 11 May 2022
Liz Fuller	elected 6 July 2021
Nicola Jones	re-elected 6 July 2021
Steve Kennard	re-elected 11 May 2022
Stuart Orr	re-elected 11 May 2022
John Robinson	elected 6 July 2021
Teresa Sladen	to 11 May 2022
Stephen Smith	appointed 6 July 2021
Evelyn Wilder	re-elected 29 July 2020
Andrew Yeo	elected 11 May 2022

Staff at 1 February 2023

Dr Ian Dungavell <small>FSA AICCM</small>	Chief Executive
Judith Chadbourne <small>FCCA</small>	Head of Finance
Nikki Druce	Volunteering Manager
Judith Etherton	Archivist
Claire Freston <small>AICCM</small>	Registrar
Victor Herman	Sexton
Leighann Heron	Client Representative (maternity cover)
Sally Kay	Bookkeeper
Nick Powell	Visitor Experience Manager
Guinevere Short	Head of Operations
Kate White	Projects Director

Gardeners

Frank Cano	Head Gardener
José Ballesteros Barragán	
Zurab Gogidze	
Erik Harris	
Adam Howe	



Chair's welcome

In 2021-22 we took exciting steps in the delivery of our Conservation Project.

First, the passing of the Highgate Cemetery Act 2022 secured the future of the Cemetery as a public burial ground by allowing us to reclaim and reuse graves which are no longer wanted. Second, our team completed RIBA Stage 1, the preparatory part of the recognised construction industry plan of work for big projects. This involved surveys of trees, monuments, soil, drainage and paths as well as drafting the maze of documents to support applications to the lottery and other funders, and to inform pre-application discussions with the local authority and heritage bodies.

Although this is an unavoidably expensive business, this year we were able to meet all but about £20k of project expenditure out of income from regular activities. Having built up substantial reserves, the Trust has been able to designate £10m for the Conservation Project, while still leaving a sizeable buffer for unexpected expenditure on day-to-day operations. In recognition of this increased activity we appointed our first full-time Head of Finance.

We have set a budget of around £900k for RIBA Stage 2, the 'concept design' phase of the project, an amount entirely in accordance with the complexity and importance of the site. At last this summer we will be able to share ideas and options for discussion with members and the public. Trustees will then decide which of our sheaf of projects will go forward for planning permission.

We are greatly encouraged by the good news that our expression of interest to the National Lottery Heritage Fund was successful and we have been invited to apply for a development grant. As well as conserving the heritage, our project will ensure the Cemetery responds to the climate crisis, sustainability, diversity and inclusion.

All this activity has been a huge challenge for our small staff and the Trustees who have been involved in discussions and monitoring decisions. As I step down as Chair, I would like to pay tribute to their commitment and energy, and time spent, far beyond what might be reasonably expected, in bringing us to this momentous point.

MARTIN ADENEY

Chair

Report of the Trustees

Although times are tough, the Friends of Highgate Cemetery Trust has had another successful and busy year. The Highgate Cemetery Act became law in April 2022 and will enable us to continue to provide burial space for the foreseeable future by managing the Cemetery in a more sustainable way. Despite visitor numbers being about 20% lower than before the pandemic, through a nimble reconfiguration of visiting options, the Trust has been able to increase visitor income by 10%. And we are making good progress with our plans to tackle the overgrown landscape, which is increasingly threatened by climate change, and to provide better facilities for visitors, volunteers and staff.

Highgate Cemetery is not just the best of London's Victorian cemeteries, but is arguably one of the finest in the whole country. While the international importance of its picturesque layout has been recognised with its designation as a Grade 1 registered landscape, there is no official designation that can capture its importance as the final resting place of generations of Londoners and others, famous or otherwise.

The Cemetery opened over 180 years ago in 1839 as a profit-making venture for a private company. But the original owners, the London Cemetery Company, finally collapsed in the 1970s in a financial scandal having devoted progressively less of its diminishing resources to the upkeep of the Cemetery. In 1975 the Friends of Highgate Cemetery Trust, a charity, was formed by local people who were concerned for the future of the Cemetery. Today we try to maintain the precarious balance of the appearance of romantic decay with the needs of conservation. We want this special place to be available to future generations to appreciate and value as we do.

We report on our work under the three charitable objects set out in our constitution. These are linked, as through promoting the public benefit of the Cemetery and continuing to bury people here, we are more likely to be able to conserve the Cemetery as a respectful sanctuary for the benefit of this and future generations.

- **PROMOTING THE PUBLIC BENEFIT:** 'to promote the public benefit in relation to Highgate Cemetery by any means appropriate and likely to preserve it as a place of historic and other interest and beauty'
- **BURYING:** 'to permit the Cemetery to be used as a public burial ground'
- **CONSERVING:** 'to secure the repair, restoration and preservation of the Cemetery, its monuments and buildings and other artefacts and their setting for the public benefit'

The Conservation Project will contribute to all of these objects and is reported on under a separate heading.

We review our aims, objectives and activities each year. This report looks at what we achieved in the financial year ended 31 August 2022 and considers the success of each activity. We have had regard to the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit when exercising any powers or duties to which the guidance is relevant.

Promoting the public benefit

'to promote the public benefit in relation to Highgate Cemetery by any means appropriate and likely to preserve it as a place of historic and other interest and beauty'

Headline numbers

83,574 visitors, an 18% increase

24% increase in visitor income

7278 took guided tours.

218,270 users of our website

around 175 volunteers

One of our greatest achievements is keeping Highgate Cemetery open every day of the year, with the exception of Christmas Day and Boxing Day, which allowed us to welcome 83,574 visitors, an increase of 18% on the previous year (2021: 70,532), though still down 19% on our highest attendance before the pandemic (2019: 103,290). Visitors are now able to visit the whole Cemetery and so more choose to do so (2022: 49,029; 2021: 39,055) rather than confine their visit to the East side (2022: 31,418; 2021: 31,477). The number of people taking tours is also increasing once again (2022: 7,278; 2021: 5,395), and we expect that this will continue in the future. As a result of the higher number of visitors, and thanks also to the temporary reduced rate of VAT for hospitality until 1 April 2022, visitor income increased by 24% to £627,615 (2021: £506,535), a full 10% greater than our highest year before the pandemic (2019: £569,976). Of those 114 visitors who reviewed us on the TripAdvisor website, 91% of rated their experience 'Excellent' or 'Very good' (2021: 96% of 45 reviewers), giving an average score of 4.6 out of 5 (2021: 4.9).

The notion of charging to visit a cemetery surprises some of our visitors until they hear that Highgate Cemetery is owned and run by a charity which receives no regular public funding and that the money they pay goes towards its maintenance and enhancement. Lingering concerns are allayed by the discovery that so much of the work is done by volunteers. Their contribution is crucial and we pay tribute to them for the many hours they give so willingly to us. Our visitor assistants and tour guides are the public face of the Cemetery to most visitors, but we also appreciate the hard work of gardening volunteers and grave tenders who are less visible but no less important for that. Our events' working group has been busy planning and running our events programme. Our trustees and committee members are of course volunteers themselves, ensuring that the charity is well-run and

looking towards the future. Our volunteer rota numbers around 175 names and we are actively recruiting for more, but there is tremendous competition for volunteers.

Our events programme once again featured talks about Cemetery residents such as William Friese-Greene, Jean Simmons and Bentfield Hucks, as well as the 'Lost Girls' of Highgate Cemetery, and on subjects such as Victorian funerals and mourning practices, alongside the ever-popular Stonemasonry workshop with Neil Luxton. We hosted an international online conference for the Association of Significant Cemeteries of Europe entitled 'Cemetourism', on the theme of 'cemeteries with stories to tell'. Once again we published three issues of our newsletter, sent to Friends as a benefit of membership; back issues are available for download on our website. Our grateful thanks to all the contributors. Our website recorded 218,270 users (2021: 220,524), 71% of whom were from the United Kingdom (2021: 82%), and 12% from the United States (2021: 6%).

We remain a popular venue for filming, especially relating to Highgate Cemetery itself or the people buried here, but commercial productions were still limited this year due to covid, although improving. Filming income amounted to £32,642 (2021: £12,950).

The works to provide swipe card access at Chester Road gate for grave owners and members which has been long delayed by an assortment of difficulties have at last been completed and, barring further difficulties, will be gradually put into use this year.

Plans for future periods

The introduction of self-guided visiting throughout the Cemetery has been hugely popular and enables a greater diversity of visitors to enjoy this special place. We will be looking at ways to increase visitor diversity further through partnerships with local groups, further enabling it to play a supporting and enriching role in local life.

We need a lot of volunteers to keep the Cemetery open and to provide information and tours for visitors but recruitment, especially of visitor assistants, remains difficult. We will continue our recruitment and training programmes for visitor assistants and tour guides and we hope to have more available at peak periods.

Burying

'to permit the Cemetery to be used as a public burial ground'

Headline numbers

71 burials – 25 full burials and 46 cremated remains

46 new graves sold – 17 full size graves and 29 for cremated remains

15 new memorials completed by us

29 ownerships transferred

It is important to us that Highgate Cemetery continues to be used as a burial ground for as long as possible as this helps to maintain its significance as a place of remembrance and keeps it knitted into the local community. To that end, we sought powers already available to local authority cemeteries in London, namely to take back ownership of abandoned graves and make them available to a new generation for the burial of their loved ones, subject to specific safeguards. Our new Act of Parliament to enable the sustainable use of the Cemetery, the Highgate Cemetery Act 2022, became law on 20 April 2022. In 2023 we will provide online access to our burial records so that it will be easier for people researching their family history to find out if they have relatives buried at Highgate Cemetery.

In addition to re-opening existing graves, we sell a small number of new graves each year but, with a few exceptions, they may not be purchased in advance of need. We sold 46 new graves, 17 full size and 29 for cremated remains (2021: 61, 21 and 40 respectively) and there were 71 burials, 25 full burials and 46 of cremated remains (2021: 95, 32 and 63 respectively). The East side cremation path area has been extended to create over 100 new cremation plots while being respectful of the environment: here we insist on biodegradable containers, plastic-free floral tributes, and planting out from a select list of natives only. The trustees will continue to set the price of grave space to maximise this asset in the short and long terms.

We endeavour to maintain the historic character of Highgate Cemetery which is valued by both grave owners and visitors alike, so we have strict controls on the types of monuments which may be erected and the decorations which may be placed upon them. We encourage grave owners to think carefully about choosing a memorial of quality and individuality rather than a catalogue item. We show them different stone types, sizes, shapes, the difference between hand and machine cut text, as well as inscriptions to think about. This year we completed 15 memorials (2021: 12), and 28 permits to erect a memorial were issued to outside contractors

(2021: 25). Unfortunately the proponents of a new mausoleum which was due to be erected on a site downhill from the Cuttings Catacombs on the West side did not complete the purchase before its planning consent lapsed.

We encourage grave owners to retain their connection with the Cemetery and the right to use graves which they may have inherited. There is a legal procedure to transfer the ownership of rights of burial that must be followed and we advise this to be done as soon as possible after the death of the owner to avoid difficulties later. This year we transferred 29 ownerships (2021: 33). Grave passes are issued with a five-year validity to encourage grave owners to keep their contact details up to date.

Highgate Cemetery is deservedly world famous as a heritage attraction and the revenue from visitors is crucial to the maintenance and enhancement of the Cemetery. But we are always conscious of the needs of the families and friends of those who are buried here. Grave owners can normally visit every day of the year except Christmas Day and Boxing Day. For the purpose of demonstrating the importance of our funerary activities, we have begun counting the number of non-paying visits by those attending the funerals or visiting the graves of family and friends.

As Highgate Cemetery will remain for the foreseeable future a working cemetery, where people choose to bury their loved ones and visit their graves, it will continue to be our duty to honour the memory of the dead and to provide their living relatives and friends with access, sympathy and respect, and to maintain the Cemetery with the greatest of care.

Plans for future periods

Now that the Highgate Cemetery Act 2022 is law we will begin the process of reuse of burial space, starting with unconsecrated areas of the cemetery. We will continue discussions with the Diocese of London about what faculty permissions may be required for grave renewal on consecrated ground. This would enable us to continue burials at Highgate Cemetery in the long term.

Conserving

'to secure the repair, restoration and preservation of the Cemetery, its monuments and buildings and other artefacts and their setting for the public benefit'

Day-to-day work to maintain and enhance the cemetery grounds continues. It would be both undesirable and impossibly expensive to restore the Cemetery to its earlier more manicured appearance when teams of gardeners were available to keep nature in check. Many people, grave owners and visitors alike, now appreciate its wilder character and find poetry in the precarious balance of the memorials and the vegetation that, left alone, would destroy them.

Mapping the Cemetery

Work continues on a new digital map of the Cemetery which will record not only the location of each grave but also the form of each memorial, linked to a database of burials and grave owners. An accurate map is an essential first step to the future conservation of the Cemetery. Cutting back vegetation to reveal the monuments has been done gradually to lessen the impact on the Cemetery, and the rest of the West side is due to be mapped in 2023, having been delayed by the pandemic. Free online public access to the burial records was provided in February 2023 and these will be linked to the maps in due course.

Plans for future periods

We will continue to manage the landscape of the Cemetery with a view to balancing the conservation of the built and natural environment. The Conservation Project, reported on below, will enable the Cemetery to balance the conservation of the natural and historic environments for the benefit of all. We are writing a 'Conservation approach for monuments' which will set out how we plan to deal with allocating resources according to the significance and condition of monuments. We will seek public views on the approach.

Conservation project

The *Highgate Cemetery Conservation Plan*, published in February 2019, set out the history and significance of this special place alongside the policies we propose to keep it that way in the future. It is available on our website.

The Plan identified a number of challenges facing the Cemetery. Some monuments are under threat from long-term decay and maturing self-seeded trees, and many trees are afflicted by pests and diseases brought about by climate change. More extreme weather is eroding gravel paths

and overwhelming the historic drainage systems. All this is impacting the historic landscape design and reducing biodiversity. The Plan also highlighted the need to improve facilities for grave owners, volunteers and staff, and the potential for enhancing the visitor experience.

In 2021 we announced the appointment of architects to prepare a landscape plan for the Cemetery and also to advise on opportunities for building new facilities. Preparatory work has involved talking to the planning and heritage authorities about what might or might not be possible, and arranging the required up-to-date surveys of trees, monuments, soil, drainage and paths. Our in-house team has been strengthened with the appointments of a Head of Finance and Head of Operations (replacing the previous role of Operations Manager). This necessary investment in our people, advisers and increased knowledge about how the Conservation Project can be implemented has so far been funded from income during the year.

In 2022 we formed a Fundraising Committee and Trustees are committed to exploring a range of funding routes for the next stages. We have been in touch with the National Lottery Heritage Fund to submit an 'expression of interest' which was successful and in February 2023 we were invited to submit a funding application. We have also worked with professional fundraisers to gauge the likelihood and extent of support. The Trustees have been clear that the conservation project should not put the Trust at risk but enhance its resilience through active management of the landscape and providing a better experience for visitors. A more detailed report was sent to members in August 2022.

Our conservation project will involve a wider range of people in heritage by embedding diversity and inclusion in our projects, focusing on local low-income families, young people, schools, and people with poor mental health or physical and learning disabilities. Neighbourhood days, youth engagement projects and volunteering programmes will engage the local community, enabled by new accessible facilities. More inclusive stories will be told. Highgate Cemetery's built and natural heritage will be in better condition through conserving and repairing the historic structures and landscape, enhancing biodiversity, resilience and sustainability and providing new facilities for those who care for and interpret the place.

Plans for future periods

The Trust is carefully managing the project, following the RIBA Plan of work. We began RIBA Stage 2 – 'concept design' – in February 2023, making sure that the look and feel of the landscape and buildings will be appropriate to Highgate Cemetery, fit for purpose and affordable. We have set a budget of around £900,000 from our designated funds to cover this stage of work. During this stage we will engage widely to ensure the views of grave owners, visitors, neighbours, members and volunteers inform the plans, as well as those of authorities such as Historic England and Camden Council. We will continue to investigate funding from the National Lottery Heritage Fund and other sources.

The following stage will begin in September 2023 during which detailed drawings and documents will be prepared ready for submission to the local authority for planning and listed building consents.

Financial report

Income and expenditure

Total income amounted to £1,730,351 compared with £1,636,861 in the preceding year, an increase of £93,490 attributable primarily to higher visitor and burial rights income. Subscriptions, donations and legacies remained in line with last year and investment income increased by £18,795.

Total expenditure increased from £1,367,969 to £1,750,752, predominantly due to spending on the Conservation Project £686,231 (2021 £335,564).

A decrease in investment values resulted in unrealised losses of £592,046 compared to unrealised gains in the previous year of £1,555,258.

As a result of the above changes, net expenditure amounted to £612,976 compared with net income of £1,825,538 in the preceding year. Of this total reduction, £2,147,304 results from a decrease in investment values and £350,667 from Conservation project costs.

Funds

Our total funds at 31 August 2022 were £11,894,938 including investments managed by BNY Mellon, our professional advisor, and COIF of £11,111,535 and cash of £1,074,219.

The accounts do not put an asset value on the Cemetery because of the difficulty of calculating a reliable and meaningful figure. There is a valuable but diminishing asset

of land still available for burial, but there is also a substantial and continuing need for maintenance and conservation. Whilst to date we have been able to undertake major conservation projects largely funded from income, this may not be the case when burial income declines. We continue to maintain a cautious approach to our balance sheet for this reason.

Fixed assets

Full disclosure of all matters relating to fixed assets is set out in the notes to the financial statements.

Investment policy

Under its articles of association, the charity has the power to make any investment which the trustees see fit. The trustees have considered the most appropriate policy for investing funds, and the portfolio objective is long term capital growth. The charity has delegated its investment management to BNY Mellon Fund Managers Limited. This arrangement was reviewed during the year and Trustees decided to maintain the position. Investments are predominantly held in the Newton Growth Fund for Charities.

Reserves Policy

The trustees' policy is to maintain the charity's reserves over time to enable the preservation and restoration of Highgate Cemetery to continue in the future. At

31 August 2022, unrestricted funds were £11,887,436. Excluding tangible fixed assets used by the group, reserves amounted to £11,842,979.

The Board of Trustees has adopted a Reserves Policy which is based on the evaluation of major risks facing the cemetery. The Trustees review the amount of reserves that are required to ensure that they are adequate to fulfil the charity's continuing obligations on at least an annual basis. The objective is to provide a level of unrestricted reserves that will minimise the impact to cemetery services should any of the risks materialise, but that does not fully cover all the main risks as the Trustees believe that this would provide an unreasonable level of excess reserves. As the risks could result in loss of income, increased costs or reputational damage, the Board seeks to mitigate their effect by holding around £500,000 to cover normal operating expenditure for at least six months, and around £1 million to cover emergency building repairs and short-term cash flow fluctuations which may arise during the year.

As at 31 August 2022 the balance of general funds was £1,887,436, excluding designated funds (2021: £12.5m). The significant movement from the prior year is due to the transfer of £10,000,000 to designated reserves. The Conservation Project Programme scope was confirmed during the year and the trustees have

agreed to designate certain funds towards the capital programme, fundraising campaign and future maintenance plan for the Cemetery.

NICOLA JONES Director

**CONSOLIDATED STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2022**

	Unrestricted Funds 2022 £	Restricted Funds 2022 £	Total Funds 2022 £	Total Funds 2021 £
INCOME FROM				
Subscriptions, donations and legacies	49,457	27,000	76,457	76,400
Charitable activities	1,421,240	-	1,421,240	1,367,536
Other trading activities	45,546	-	45,546	17,959
Investments	185,257	-	185,257	166,462
Other	1,851	-	1,851	8,504
TOTAL INCOME	<u>1,703,351</u>	<u>27,000</u>	<u>1,730,351</u>	<u>1,636,861</u>
EXPENDITURE ON				
Raising funds	76,560	-	76,560	61,643
Charitable activities	1,647,192	27,000	1,674,192	1,306,326
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	<u>1,723,752</u>	<u>27,000</u>	<u>1,750,752</u>	<u>1,367,969</u>
	(20,401)	-	(20,401)	268,892
Net gains/(losses) on investments	(592,046)	-	(592,046)	1,555,258
Taxation	(529)	-	(529)	1,388
Net (Expenditure)/Income	<u>(612,976)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>(612,976)</u>	<u>1,825,538</u>
Transfer between funds	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>
Net Movement in Funds	<u>(612,976)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>(612,976)</u>	<u>1,825,538</u>
Total Funds brought forward	<u>12,500,412</u>	<u>7,502</u>	<u>12,507,914</u>	<u>10,682,376</u>
Total Funds carried forward	<u><u>11,887,436</u></u>	<u><u>7,502</u></u>	<u><u>11,894,938</u></u>	<u><u>12,507,914</u></u>

All income and expenditure derives from continuing activities.

**CONSOLIDATED BALANCE SHEET
AS AT 31 AUGUST 2022**

	2022		2021	
	£	£	£	£
Fixed assets				
Tangible fixed assets		44,457		29,102
Investments		<u>11,111,535</u>		<u>11,521,906</u>
		11,155,992		11,551,008
Current assets				
Stocks	10,290		7,840	
Debtors	29,472		99,426	
Cash at bank	<u>1,074,219</u>		<u>983,351</u>	
	1,113,981		1,090,617	
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year		<u>(374,478)</u>		<u>(133,683)</u>
Net current assets		<u>739,503</u>		<u>956,934</u>
Total assets less current liabilities		11,895,495		12,507,942
Provision for liabilities		(557)		(28)
Total net assets		<u>11,894,938</u>		<u>12,507,914</u>
Funds				
Unrestricted funds		1,887,436		12,500,412
Unrestricted funds - designated		10,000,000		-
Restricted funds		7,502		7,502
Total funds		<u>11,894,938</u>		<u>12,507,914</u>

The directors acknowledge their responsibilities for complying with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006 with respect to accounting records and the preparation of the accounts. These financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the provisions in Part 15 of the Companies Act 2006 applicable to companies subject to the small companies regime.

We confirm that the information contained in these summarised financial statements is taken from the audited annual accounts for the year ended 31 August 2022 and includes details relating to both the Statement of Financial Activities and the Balance Sheet.

The audited accounts were approved by the trustees on 29 March 2023, are subject to an unqualified audit report, and have been submitted to the Charity Commission and filed at Companies House. These summarised statements may not contain sufficient information to allow for a full understanding of the financial affairs of the Friends of Highgate Cemetery Trust.

For further information, the full accounts, the relevant auditors' report and the trustees' report should be consulted. Copies can be downloaded from our website, www.highgatecemetery.org, or from the Charity Commission, www.charity-commission.gov.uk.

MARTIN ADENEY
Chair

NICOLA JONES
Director

Thank you!

Volunteering

Highgate Cemetery thrives thanks to the many volunteers who donate their time, skills and expertise to ensure that the Friends of Highgate Cemetery Trust can continue to look after this very special place. If you would like to know more about our volunteering opportunities, please visit <https://highgatecemetery.org/help/Volunteer>.

Membership

We would also like to thank our members for their continuing support. Membership costs just £20 a year, and it is easy to join online at <https://highgatecemetery.org/help/join>.

Donations and legacies

We are fortunate to receive grants and donations from trusts and foundations, members, visitors and the public. We are also grateful to those who remember us in their will. You can find information about leaving a legacy or about making a donation, at <https://highgatecemetery.org/help/donate>.

**HIGHGATE
CEMETERY.**

FRIENDS OF HIGHGATE CEMETERY TRUST