



FRIENDS OF NUNHEAD CEMETERY

Minutes of FONC Annual General Meeting held on Saturday 28 June 2025
The Anglican Chapel, Nunhead Cemetery, SE15 3LP

Present: Trustees

Jeremy Partington (JP)	Chairman
Carol Stevenson (CS)	Vice-Chairman
Ann Coley (AC)	Treasurer
Jeff Hart (JH)	Co-ordinator
Jane Hart (JCH)	Minutes Secretary
Petra Handoca (PH)	
Charles Newman (CN)	
Garry Wiles (GW)	

20 ordinary members were also attendance.

1 Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence had been received from: Trustees Oliver Lomer, Phoebe Shannon-Fagan, Keith Turpin, Jamie Warner, and Ron Woollacott and ordinary members Michele Burford, Linda Martin, and Maureen Woollacott.

2 Chairman's welcome and report

The Chairman, Jeremy Partington, welcomed all present to the Annual General Meeting. He thanked all Trustees and volunteers who assisted in the cemetery, whatever the weather, not forgetting those who have helped in preparing and distributing FONC News, the website and other FONC administrative tasks. He noted that Trustees had met regularly with the London Borough of Southwark (LBS) officers to ensure that the views and objectives of FONC were considered by the Council as owners of the cemetery. He noted that FONC volunteers' enthusiasm had continued progress on clearing vegetation, inscription recording and other work in the cemetery. In November, in conjunction with 15 Froglife charity volunteers, work had been undertaken in expanding and improving the pond area. Subsequently FONC had been awarded a Biodiversity Grant of £43k to develop a boardwalk and pond dipping platform, and improve wildlife habitat around the pond. FONC had organised its second annual Carol concert in December in the Anglican chapel which had again proved to be very popular. 2025 Open Day had taken place, as usual on the 3rd Saturday in May. Blessed with good weather the Open Day saw even more visitors than last year; probably the fourth successive record year. The Council had funded the restoration of the full length of Limesford Road boundary walls which had greatly enhanced the south side of the cemetery. He further noted that over the year numerous monuments has been re-erected and restored including near the East Lodge, and around the Jenny Hill memorial on the West Crescent. Finally he expressed his appreciation to Jane and Jeff Hart and London Borough of Southwark officers for the considerable amount of work that they put into progressing the East Lodge Restoration project. Work had finally started on the replacement FONC cabin and on the restoration work of the East Lodge itself. In a couple of years' time, hopefully on 29 July 2027, the opening of the restored Grade II listed building should offer a fantastic welcome to cemetery visitors with the provision of a café, community space and an office for FONC as well as accessible toilets.

3 Minutes of the previous Trustee meeting held on 29 June 2024

2.1 Matters of accuracy

No matters of accuracy were identified and the minutes were adopted.

2.2 Matters arising

There were no matters arising from the minutes.

Adoption of the minutes – proposed by Jeff Hart, seconded by Ann Coley.

4 Annual Report of the Trustees

JH presented the Annual Report of the Trustees for the period 1 June 2024 to 31 May 2025. He noted that FONC membership had increased by 20. He noted that Carol Stevenson, FONC Vice-Chairman, had stepped up to take

on the role of Membership Secretary following the death of Simon Mercer in July 2024, as FONC Membership Secretary, had done over many years to maintain the FONC Membership database. He also thanked Oli Lomer who had moved to Cambridge and was standing down following a very constructive three-year term, particularly improving FONC's communication strategy. FONC was also fortunate in appointing three new Trustees this year – Jamie Warner, Petra Handoca and Phoebe Shannon-Fagan, all of whom had significant skills in areas the existing Trustees were not strong in. The Instagram and Facebook accounts had been unified and a team of social media volunteers, originally led by Oli and now led by Phoebe, had been able to post more exciting and relevant content on a regular basis. Simon Quill, the webmaster continued to manage FONC's website in the hope that FONC would be able to re-energise the website which formed part of the digitisation strategy of the East Lodge restoration project. FONC Trustees were committed to making this happen. Ron Woollacott continued to produce the high quality quarterly journal FONC News as well as adding Nunhead Notables 5 and Nunhead Notables 6 to FONC's extensive range of publications. The second, now annual, Carol concert in the Anglican chapel proved overwhelmingly popular with some 600 people attending. The Peckham and Nunhead Free Film Festival annual visit to the cemetery continued to be popular reaching the maximum limit for attendees. The Monument Inscription recording team, led by Garry Wiles now had some 22 regular volunteers participating in the work. Some 2400 records had now been saved electronically. FONC had helped to facilitate a programme of art events in the chapel during the summer and autumn months which proved very popular, attracting a new audience to the cemetery and a full programme of arts events would take place this year from July to October. The 2025 Open Day being the most successful Open Day yet with a record attendance of over 5,640. Fulker Contractors, working with Southwark Council, had undertaken a number of repairs to monuments on site, all to a high standard enhancing the visual impact around the cemetery. FONC had also provided a financial contribution to the work. The work on the Limesford Road boundary wall had greatly enhanced the south entrance to the cemetery. It had, however, been a frustrating year regarding progress on the East Lodge Restoration project – from Ruin to Revival – where for much of the year there appeared to many, little progress was being made but work had finally started on both the replacement cabin for FONC and on the restoration work of the East Lodge itself. As part of the project the new Outreach and Development Manager, had been appointed and had started work in February.

JP thanked JH for his report and invited questions from those present.

Following a question about the restored Limesford Road boundary walls, it was confirmed that the wall had been built in front of the partially taken down old wall and was to a high standard. It was noted that the Conservation Management Plan which was adopted in 2023 was aimed, among other things, at improving the biodiversity in the cemetery.

JP then moved to the formal adoption of the report.

Proposer: Jeremy Partington

Secunder: Carol Stevenson

The report was adopted.

5 Practical onsite work report

CS presented the report, noting that with an increase in the number of volunteers, they had carried out a record of 808 hours of practical work during the year. She noted that work plans could change identifying that when volunteers arrived for a special workday to replant the stone circle flowerbed, they found that the plants had not arrived but a huge limb had fallen in the East Lodge compound damaging the fence and letting dogs and people into the worksite, so the volunteers rectified that instead.

JP thanked CS for her report.

The report was noted.

6 Treasurer's report

AC presented the report, noting that the accounts were presented on a receipts / expenditure basis. She noted that she had produced a written report which was available on the FONC website as part of the AGM paper pack. She thanked Carol Stevenson for her hard work in taking over as Membership Secretary and JCH for managing the publications desk receipts. She thanked Midge Cameron for taking over as the Independent Examiner. She also noted that, although the Charity Commission did not require an audit or a review of the accounts, FONC considered this to be good practice and had an independent examiner report that had been tabled with the AGM papers.

She explained the FONC reserves policy which included money for monument repairs each year. She noted that the unreserved funds continued to grow but that there were plans for the unreserved fund spend including buying equipment to support volunteering in the cemetery and upgrading the FONC website. In 2025 FONC would contribute £10,000 to repairs in the coming year.

JP thanked AC for her report. Gwyneth Stokes thanked Ann for all her hard work and for keeping the FONC accounts in such a healthy state. In answer to the question about gift aid, AC noted that she expected around a £1000 from gift aid which was made up of gift aid from people who signed up as membership and also from gift aid claims on donations of less than £20. A question was raised how much stall holders pay for stalls at the Open Day and whether FONC charged on a percentage of takings made by stall holders. AC noted that, although some stall holders made a lot of money, asking for a contribution based on their takings would be difficult to administer.

JP thanked AC for her report moved for the formal adoption of the report.

Proposer: Jeremy Partington

Seconder: Petra Handoca

The report was adopted.

7 Independent examiner's report

As noted above, the satisfactory independent examiner's report, which was part of the AGM paper pack, had been prepared by Midge Cameron.

8 Appointment of Trustees

JH explained that in accordance with clause 13 of the FONC Constitution, a third of the Trustees were required to stand down but could seek re-appointment. Jeff Hart, Keith Turpin and Ron Woollacott were standing down following their three-year term but were seeking re-appointment. He noted that Oli Lomer was also standing down but was not seeking re-appointment.

It was agreed to take the nominations as a group.

All were duly appointed by unanimous agreement.

The following Trustees would automatically continue their terms – Ann Coley, Jane Hart, Petra Handoca, Charles Newman, Jeremy Partington, Phoebe Shannon-Fagan, Carol Stevenson, Jamie Warner and Garry Wiles.

9 Motions

No motions were proposed.

10 Any Other Business

There was no other business.

There was a break for refreshments (provided by a number of Trustees).

This was followed by a crypt visit led by Jeremy Partington.