

**Friends of Nunhead Cemetery
Practical Work Annual Report
1/4/2022 to 31/3/2023**

Hours worked

This section of the report covers all Friends of Nunhead Cemetery (FONC) activities in the Cemetery recorded in the Volunteering book, other than that done by the Monument Inscriptions Recording volunteers and the Publications and Enquiries Desk volunteers, which will be reported separately.

This report covers a full 12 months.

Total hours worked (practical work): 518¾ hours (Last year: 611¾ hours)

Total number of volunteers (practical work): 38 volunteers (Last year: 43)

Total hours worked (special events): 348½ hours (Last year: 238¾ hours)

Total number of volunteers (special events): 21 volunteers (Last year: 15)

Note: off-site work on the East Lodge Project is not included here.

Total hours worked (corporate workday): 165½ hours (Last year: 0)

Total number of FONC volunteers (corporate workday): 6 (Last year: 0)

Total number of corporate volunteers (corporate workday): 25 (Last year: 0)

Practical workday report

We spent a lot of time this year clearing and repairing monuments in the Cemetery, and the practical workday volunteers have been helping the monument inscriptions team access monuments in more overgrown areas. We have also been able to repair some monuments, though our winch did not survive the experience.

Fallen trees and branches, and removing dead trees, continue to keep our volunteers busy, and although we are pleased to report that Ash Dieback is making only slow progress through the Cemetery, a lot of the trees which self-seeded in the Cemetery are reaching maturity and we can expect more work every time a storm blows through or a prolonged period of hot, dry weather stresses the trees.

We have been harvesting some of our young ash to provide fences and dead-hedges to restore the corner of the Dissenters' Triangle damaged by falling trees in Storm Eunice last year, and to protect areas for butterfly habitat and help define paths. We planted woodland wildflower seeds in various places, and a young flowering cherry tree in the Dissenters' Triangle to replace the storm-destroyed one. We have also been clearing bramble in the Thirties area to help improve biodiversity, and once a year we revisit an area above the pond where a long term bramble removal project is showing good results.

The view of St Paul's has been cleared, with the help of corporate workday volunteers from DEFRA who cut huge amounts of bramble and Southwark Council who removed a couple of big trees that were growing into the view. We have planted a hedge across the top to protect people at the viewpoint from the sharp drop into the buried area. We will keep it trimmed!

The pond was cleared of thrown branches, the area around it weeded, and the fence around it replaced, a big task which required an additional workday. At the moment it has water in it (and a pair of nesting mallards), and we are hoping for sufficient rain to keep it wet for most of the year.

We restored our notice-boards, and also repaired the posts which define the dogs of leads area after they were twice vandalised.

We continue to maintain our work cabin and our tools, as well as clearing access to the chapel and crypt. We also suffered from a break in to the East Lodge Compound (nothing stolen – I assume the thieves were disappointed to find little except tables and notices), which entailed repairs to the storage container and the cut barbed wire.

One of our last jobs of the year was the removal of ivy from the wall pillars on the Linden Grove boundary. While we could not reach the very top with our ladders, we have made a lot of difference and hope that Southwark Council will be able to complete the task using a cherry picker.

New volunteers are always welcome, you only have to do as much as suits you. We provide tools, on-the task training, hot drinks and have gloves if you do not have your own. Meet us at our work cabin on the first Sunday of every month, from 10am onwards. (Ring Tim and Carol Stevenson on 020 7732 8396 for more details, or e-mail Nunhead.stevensons@gmail.com).

Statistics are given below.



Carol Stevenson April 2023

