

# CHAIRPERSON REPORT 2023/24

In May 2023, we were allowed to re-enter Heene Cemetery, after four months of safety checks and laying down of unstable memorial crosses was completed by Worthing Borough Council.

Sadly, we had missed holding a Spring open day to see many of the spring flowers, and the ivy and bramble had started to establish itself again. Our volunteers set to, working hard to tidy areas, ready for our June open day and tours and the weather was kind to us.



Our first event of the year was a joint celebration with St Botolph's Church, celebrating 150 years since the consecration of Heene Cemetery and the first burial. We had many new visitors who also very much enjoyed our first "Stories in the Street" with Carol Sullivan.

Sadly, a week later, our store bench was raided and we lost many of the reference books and cards our volunteers use to identify the vast number of species we have living in this precious site of biodiversity, we care for.



Our "sing-a-long soiree with Roly's rogues" was postponed from July to early August, due to some very wet and windy weather conditions. It was a great success, and everyone enjoyed a warm sunny evening of entertainment.

Once again, we achieved the Community Green Flag award for 2023/2024, and the dedicated hard work of our volunteers, to achieve this, is greatly appreciated. They have ensured that the following criteria is met.



- A WELCOMING PLACE
- HEALTHY, SAFE AND SECURE
- WELL MAINTAINED AND CLEAN
- ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT
- BIODIVERSITY, LANDSCAPE AND HERITAGE
- COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT
- MANAGEMENT/ACHIEVEMENTS

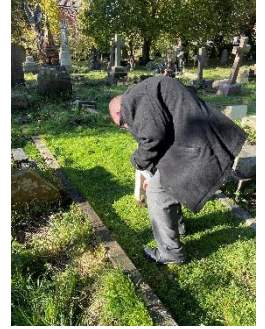
Despite the major understaffing of Worthing Borough Council environmental services, our Park Ranger Anthony, tackled the hard work of strimming all open areas in the cemetery in preparation for the open day. We are very grateful for the support and encouragement we receive from Worthing Borough Council and many other services and groups.



## CHAIRPERSON REPORT 2023/24 (cont.)



Our final event of the year, was our annual Remembrance Gathering where the Mayor, Standard Bearers, Bugler and Sarah Nathaniel of CWGC, provided a wonderful short service in memory of our 8 commonwealth war grave burials and 24 family memorials to military members buried abroad.



Throughout the year we had many visitors “dropping in” when the gates are open and we are working there. Everyone is welcome to visit us on a Tuesday or Saturday afternoon between 2pm-4pm.

After advertising with Community Works, we welcomed several new volunteers towards the end of the year, who have taken to helping in many of the roles necessary to make the Friends of Heene Cemetery the success it is today.

Friends of Heene Cemetery are about to grow and build from the foundations laid over the last ten years. The committee have been working hard to produce a new roles document whereby volunteers can share the unseen administration and responsibilities of running a successful group.

**Thank you, once again, to all our volunteers and supporters who enable us to continue this valuable and vital work in the centre of an urban area. Sue Standing – Chairperson FoHC**