

21 November 2018

Dear Edinburgh graveyard 'friends of' group representative,

Lasting Impressions: The Greyfriars Kirkyard Community Project

Thank you for attending the roundtable meeting of Friends of Edinburgh graveyards on 12 November and for contributing to the helpful discussion about the project above. This letter sets out a summary of our project's aims and format and ways in which graveyard friends of groups can get involved. I would be grateful if you could circulate this information to members of your graveyard friends group so that they can see what is planned. Caroline Gerard will shortly be in touch to ask whether your group will sign up to a letter of support which Edinburgh World Heritage will send with their funding application to the Heritage Lottery Fund.

A key strand of this project is supporting Edinburgh graveyard 'friends of' groups to develop their own projects, audiences and membership to encourage public appreciation of burial grounds as heritage sites. We can help increase knowledge and skills, inspire fresh ideas and provide new contacts through the three options outlined below. Activities and resource are all free and there is an emphasis on enjoyment and creative learning. Participants may join in, or opt out, of the options below as best fits their interests and needs:

1. **Workshops** on carrying out graveyard research, creating interpretation and educational resources, recording graveyards (there are separate opportunities to learn a method of digital photography able to recover inscriptions from weathered gravestones and identifying different stone types). There will be sessions on graveyard conservation, including trees and landscapes, fundraising and on caring for and cleaning gravestones. The workshops are open to all of the projects partners as well as to interested members of the public.
2. A **project officer** is available to give bespoke advice, information and support. The officer can help 'friends of' groups to carry out their own projects to hone their skills in recording, research, visitor surveys, and to produce educational and interpretational materials. This could include digital resources like apps, podcasts geocaching, filmmaking and photography, as well creative resources such as artwork, leaflets, drama, game-making, trails and tours. Short projects can follow a volunteer's idea and interest area or involve collaborating with others to deliver a resource for Greyfriars Kirkyard (e.g. a national curriculum-based activity for a primary school visit). The project officer will help to showcase, promote and celebrate the work of all of the Edinburgh graveyard 'friends of' groups' work through social media, public exhibitions and at an end of project conference.
3. **Joining a network of new contacts** for peer-to-peer information exchange, learning and partnership working. The project will bring together different generations and people from a wide variety of backgrounds to enable participants to experience heritage from fresh perspectives. Participants will be able to further enhance their understanding of how and why people form attachments to, value or enjoy learning about, historic graveyards. New insights gained will help volunteers to present their graveyards to visitors in ways most meaningful and enjoyable to current and potential audiences.

The Greyfriars Kirkyard project's partners include primary schools, youth groups, university students, social outreach projects, ethnic minority groups, local residents, and other volunteers involved in heritage management (e.g. church guides, members of local heritage societies). The

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project's network aims to give participants more confidence to reach out to new audiences in the future and the opportunity to forge fruitful and lasting partnerships.

If our funding application is successful the Greyfriars Kirkyard Community Project will run from July 2019 to June 2021. I believe the project will help 'friends of' groups across the city and leave a strong and inclusive legacy of increased public appreciation of graveyards as valuable heritage sites. It is intended to build resources not just through acquiring new knowledge and skills but also by giving your members opportunities do something fun and new together – to encourage team building and to help develop a stronger sense of your group's mission and future priorities. We will work with you to raise wider awareness of your own historic graveyards to attract new visitor and 'friends of' members.

All good wishes



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