

It has been a testing time for us all since the sudden lockdown in March 2020, when meetings, task days, talks and events held in the cemeteries stopped. However, some of our work did continue.

Still on the positive side, many more people have visited cemeteries for exercise, a couple of volunteers have come forward and we have received enquiries via our web site.

FOSC's last newsletter was distributed in March 2019 and so it is now time for an update from the past to the present and to look towards the future.

### May 2019

#### National Cemeteries Week

NCW was held from 11th to 19th May in 2019, around 40 friends groups, including the FOSC, participating.

Our event took place on a lovely sunny day at Park Road Cemetery, Cheadle.



The cemetery opened in 1903, laid out in a traditional grid pattern. There was a chapel, mortuary, and house near the main gate where all the registrars lived.

### August 2019

#### Brunswick Cemetery Event



The purpose of the day was to show off the renovation of an old cemetery in the centre of Portwood roundabout, Stockport.

In February 2016, members of the FOSC, together with Manchester AFC Cadets, removed a considerable amount of debris from the site, took out self-seeded saplings, pruned the trees and cut the grassed area.

FOSC also applied for funding to renovate the flagged area and install two interpretation boards on the site. We should like to say thank you to the Stockport Council staff whose support and advice enabled us to carry out this project successfully. Our thanks also go to Stockport's local area committee, Tesco, and the Vernon Building Society. Without the help of the cadets and staff from Greater Manchester ACF over the past few years, we could not have achieved as much as we have. They have worked tirelessly in all weathers and are a credit to the Army Cadet Force and the local community.

## October 2019

**Bulbs** supplied by Stockport Council were planted at Highfield Cemetery by FOSC members and at Willow Grove Cemetery by the Community Pay Back team.

## Remembrance Sunday 2019

Around 12.30 on Remembrance Sunday the parade, led by Belle Vue Brass band, left St Mary's church to lay wreaths and hold services at the Cenotaph at Reddish Road and the Cross of Sacrifice at Willow Grove Cemetery.

Following the band were local councillors, and the Reverends Angie, Kate and Alison, who read the services at both locations-

Also in attendance were representatives of police force, T S Hawkins Sea & Marine Cadets, FOSC, the congregation and rainbows section of St Mary's Church, the 2<sup>nd</sup> Reddish Brownies and St Elisabeth's Church.

**Thank you** to all the volunteers/stewards and to the employees of Stockport Council who helped with the parade.



## The work of FOSC continued in 2020.

## Park Road Cemetery September 2020



Before

Stockport council placed a large tub planted with shrubs near the pedestrian entrance of the cemetery on Brookfield Road. FOSC added some bulbs in October and this feature was repainted in March 2021. Stockport Cemetery Services kindly provided the paint for the project.



After

## October 2020

At Park Road Cemetery, the Probation Services team weeded burial sections and cut back some overgrown shrubs. Tasks were put on hold in December and recommenced again March 2021.

Additional shrubs bushes and flowers have been added by Stockport Council in some sections of the cemetery.

## Remembrance Day In Park Road Cemetery, November 2020

Jean contacted me in March to say that she and her sister Marion who live near the cemetery had spent time walking through the cemetery during lockdown and that they would like to knit poppies to place, on the war graves that are scattered across in Park Road cemetery, for Remembrance Day. This was no small task!



Jean and Marion placing poppies in Park Road Cemetery.

## Remembrance Day In Willow Grove Cemetery, 2020

There was no Remembrance Parade or service at the Cenotaph on Reddish Road, nor at the Cross of Sacrifice in Willow Grove, in 2020.

The friends group knitted poppies and bought Royal British Legion wreaths.



The Cross of Sacrifice - Willow Grove

The Cenotaph - Reddish Road below



January 2021



Stockport Council and City of Trees, the Community Forest for Greater Manchester, have secured funding from Central Government's Nature for Climate Fund. The aim of this initiative is to plant more than 40 million trees and restore 35,000 hectares of peatland in England to help increase biodiversity, lock up carbon and reduce our vulnerability to climate change.

This will make a key contribution to the Government's legally binding commitment to achieving carbon neutrality by 2050.

In Stockport, 8 sites have been identified where increasing tree cover will provide a range of wildlife and amenity benefits. One of those sites is adjacent to the River Tame near Willow Grove Cemetery.

These planting locations have been carefully selected to ensure that they will not cause detriment to existing habitat space and the trees will be set back from footpaths to make sure that sight lines are maintained. Links to this scheme can be found on FOSC's web site for those who wish to know more.

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COMMONWEALTH  
WAR GRAVES  
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WAR GRAVES WEEK  
A WEEK TO REMEMBER

21-28 May 2021

## The First Ever War Graves Week

Through a series of talks, tours and events, both physical and virtual, War Graves Week will bring an immersive and inclusive programme that will reveal CWGC's work and history in all its variety and demonstrate its ongoing relevance. Earlier in the year seeds were made available from the CWGC to create a living legacy in honour of those who died in the two world wars.

The seeds requested by FOSC will be planted in Park Road Cemetery, Cheadle and Willow Grove Cemetery South Reddish

## DATA PROTECTION

As a group we hold data from newsletters, mailings, events etc. If you no longer wish to receive information from the group, please send an email [sheilaarobins@outlook.com](mailto:sheilaarobins@outlook.com)

**Finally** updates will be provided on our web site of any future meetings task days, events [www.friendsofstockportcemeteries.co.uk](http://www.friendsofstockportcemeteries.co.uk)

*Newsletter by S Robins edited by Mo Fahey*