# Help to maintain one of Newcastle's most important historic graveyards

## Join the St James' Heritage and Environment Group on Wednesday 7th October, between 10.30am and 1pm at St James' Graveyard

St James' Graveyard was the parish churchyard of Benwell and surrounding areas from 1833 until it closed in the 1960s. More than 13,000 people are buried here from all walks of life. They include some of the most famous and influential people on Tyneside such as the town centre developer, Richard Grainger, the glass manufacturer John Sowerby, and the world famous mining engineer John Buddle, After closure the graveyard was neglected, soon becoming an impassable wilderness of weeds and rubbish covering all the memorials. About 16 years ago St James' Heritage and Environment Group was formed to restore the graveyard and find out who was buried there. St James' Graveyard is now an important site on the heritage map of the city.

A recent spate of vandalism has added to the problems of maintaining this area, despite the efforts of the small band of dedicated volunteers who turn up weekly throughout the year to work there whatever the weather. They really need help. Can you spare a couple of hours on **Wednesday 7th October** to do some weeding or clearing? No skills necessary. Tools provided - also hot drinks and cake. Drop in anytime between 10.30 -1pm.

The graveyard is on Benwell Lane adjacent to St James' Church - postcode NE15 6RR. It is opposite the Lidl store where parking is available.

**Would you like to adopt one of the graves?**

If you have a particular interest in any of the famous people buried at St James' you might like to adopt a grave, visiting regularly to keep it clear of weeds. Oy maybe you have ancestors buried at St James' and would like to make sure that the area around their grave is kept tidy.

**Guided tour 1pm Wednesday 7th October**

At 1pm there will be a guided tour of the graveyard focusing on the stories of working people of the west end. This is a chance to hear about the lives of some of the working people who are buried there, including farmers, miners and soldiers.

Short tours of some of the highlights of the graveyard are also available, and there are interpretation boards, leaflets and booklets if you want to explore the graveyard yourself.

**Donations are always welcome!**

The Heritage and Environment Group is an independent registered charity, wholly run by volunteers. All its events, activities and publications are free of charge. They rely on donations to support their work including the maintenance of the graveyard. Any help you can give whether it is a few hours of work or a small donation will be gratefully received.

**Further information**

To find out more, contact them by email on stjamesbenwell@gmail.com or write to them c/o 12/14 Sunnybank Avenue, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE15 6SD