

There's lots to explore on the

# St James' Graveyard Children's Challenge



First follow the trail

Then try the challenges to find out more about this special place!

## About St James' Graveyard

St James' Church and graveyard opened in 1833 - five years before Queen Victoria came to the throne and long before our parents and grandparents were born. Benwell was very different in those days. Most of this area was covered by fields and farms.

In the years since it opened, thousands of local families have used the church for weddings, christenings and funerals.

Burials in the graveyard stopped in the 1960s but people still come to the church for special family occasions.

Nowadays the graveyard is a calm, green space in the heart of a busy shopping area.

Its trees and bushes shelter all sorts of wildlife.

Its 500 graves remind us of the lives of people who worshipped in St James' or had links with Benwell and places nearby.

### Keep safe!

- Watch out for things that might hurt you, like litter and broken glass.
- Don't wander into the undergrowth - there are plants and insects that could sting you.
- Keep away from any 'no go' areas you're told about and don't eat berries!

### Show your respect!

- It's fine to come up close and touch the gravestones, but don't climb or sit on them.
- And please don't mark them in any way!

This trail was produced by the St James' Heritage & Environment Group with help from the children of Bridgewater Primary School and funded by Make Your Mark.



St James' Heritage & Environment Group

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Images in A, G and H courtesy of Newcastle Libraries & Information Service



## St James' Graveyard Trail

### Can you find...



- 1 Richard Grainger behind the railings
- 2 John Walker's stone dog
- 3 Isabella from Benwell Fishery
- 4 A family called Chicken
- 5 A 'conker' (horse chestnut) tree
- 6 John Buddle, mining engineer
- 7 Bishop Arthur's hat
- 8 Two holly trees
- 9 Ivy clinging to a wall
- 10 A finger pointing upwards
- 11 A red marble gravestone
- 12 William, a coal miner
- 13 Tank Trooper Turnbull
- 14 Army Driver Robson
- 15 Jane, killed by a car
- 16 A box for the birds
- 17 A family from Elswick
- 18 The Andersons who lived in Benwell Towers
- 19 Redheads from Scotswood
- 20 An angel resting in peace

To finish, stand where you can see all these gravestones!



# Challenges

## A What's the graveyard for?

St James' is Benwell's parish church. The church and its grounds are used for weddings and christenings as well as weekly worship. Funeral services are still held, though there are no burials in the graveyard now.



13,500 people have been buried here! In the past, coffins were brought up to the church along a special carriageway that ran through the graveyard from a gate that's now blocked off.

If a family could afford it, they paid for a memorial. But thousands of people were buried here without one. They included servants, farm workers and residents of the workhouse. A miner might have had a memorial if he'd died due to an accident at the pit.



Find this information from the board near the graveyard entrance:

- How many times was the graveyard extended?
- What was a workhouse?
- How long was John Buddle's funeral procession?

## B What's on a gravestone?

Gravestones tell us about people who have died. They also help us to understand more about what life was like for them. As well as the age and date of death, there may be something about their jobs, their family or where they lived.

This gravestone tells us about the Gray family. Find it (B on the map) and try out the quiz below:

- Where did Martha and Robert live?
- What was their eldest son's name?
- Why did they give the name Martha to two of their daughters?
- Did their eldest daughter die before they did?
- Why did she have a different surname to her parents?



## C What's on a gravestone?

Gravestones are 'memorials'. They come in all sorts of shapes and sizes. Many have beautiful carved lettering, pictures and Christian symbols. The stonemasons who carved them were very skilled. Some masons recorded their names on the stones.



Masons used different kinds of stone. For example - Coloured marble could be polished and it lasted well, but cost a lot. Sandstone was easy to carve but wore away in the wind and rain.

Walk along the old funeral carriageway and choose your favourite ....

- carving of flowers
- lettering
- shape of gravestone

Find the name of a stonemason. (usually on the narrow side of the gravestone)

Imagine choosing a memorial for someone.

- what kind of stone would it be carved from?
- what would you ask a mason to carve on it?

## D What's on a gravestone?

Often gravestones have quotes from the Bible or other sayings. We call these words 'inscriptions'. For example - 'Still to the memory dear' 'Gone but not forgotten'



Find an inscription and think about what it means.

Special words and phrases tell us how people felt about the person who died.

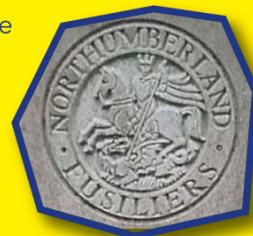
For example - 'In loving memory of...' 'Sacred to the memory of...'

Find ten inscriptions on gravestones around D on the map. What phrase is used most?

We are also sometimes told more about a person.

For example, the regiment of a soldier or the place where someone lived.

Find a gravestone that gives information like this.



## E What's growing here?

All sorts of trees grow in the graveyard.

Find trees to suit these descriptions:

- dangly
- spiky
- bushy
- scary

Do you know the names for any of the trees?

Which tree might be a weeping willow?

Whatever season, there's something to see here.

Can you see any of these now?

- conkers
- holly berries
- daisies
- willow catkins

Stand in the place where the photo was taken (E on the map).

Do the trees and flowers look the same or not?

Why?



Find this grove of yew trees.

(but don't touch the needles or berries - they're poisonous!)

Guess why yews are often found in graveyards.

## F What's living here?

There's lots of wildlife living in the graveyard!

Look for the tall trees below the church (F on the map).

How many nesting boxes can you spot?

They're for birds and bats.

Listen while you count to 30 in your head. You might hear a wood pigeon or a blackbird or a crow. Try doing this again until you've heard at least three different bird songs.

In summer, butterflies and bees visit the graveyard. If it's warm and sunny today, see if you can spot any butterflies.

Hiding among the gravestones and in the ivy are many tiny animals. Spiders love making their webs in the cracks. Slugs love dark corners.

Stand very still beside a gravestone and see if you can spot a spider moving over it.

Look at the ground around a gravestone. Can you spot any slugs or other minibeasts?



## G Who's buried here?

The people buried here lived at different times in the past.

Richard Grainger built a fine new city centre for Newcastle, completed in 1842. Grainger Market, near Grey's Monument, is named after him.



What year did Grainger die in?

John Sowerby's glass factory made ornaments sold all over the world. He lived in a big house called Benwell Towers not far from St James', which still stands today. The house has had many owners. The Andersons (map clue 18) lived there before him and Bishop Arthur Lloyd (map clue 7) once lived there too.

Find John Sowerby's gravestone below the conker tree (G on the map).

What was his wife's name?

Soldiers who fought in World War I (1914-18) and World War II (1939-45) are buried around the graveyard.

Find some soldiers' gravestones.

What regiments did they belong to?

Look for Driver Robson's grave (map clue 14).

World War I ended on 11th November 1918. How many days before then did Driver Robson die?

## H What's changed here?

This picture of St James' was taken in 1900. Places change as the years pass but you can often still recognise them if you look hard.



Go to the bottom corner of the graveyard (H on the map) and look back up towards the church.

What has changed since the picture was taken and what has stayed the same?

Walk back up towards the church entrance.

As you go, see if you can find some gravestones that have been added since 1900.