

# Governance Document

## Name

The group shall be known as the North East Funerary Heritage Group (NEFHG).

## Aims

To foster networking, learning, and collaboration on funerary heritage in the North East of England. We take a flexible approach to defining the 'North East.' Our general remit covers the counties of Northumberland, Durham, and Tyne and Wear, considering both their modern and historic boundaries. Anyone working on, or with an interest in, any aspect of funerary heritage within this area is warmly invited to join as a member.

To complement the work of other organisations by providing local insights and initiatives.

To engage the public, researchers, heritage professionals, and funerary organisations in preserving, researching, and raising awareness of funerary heritage. The group welcomes all individuals with an interest in funerary heritage, regardless of background or expertise.

## Membership

Membership is open to individuals, organisations, and institutions with an interest in funerary heritage and . This includes community members, volunteers, artists, and others without formal roles in heritage or funerary sectors.

Membership categories include:

- **Individual Member:** Open to anyone with an interest in funerary heritage.
- **Organisation Member:** Open to organisations, including heritage groups, academic institutions, and community organisations that share our goals.

## Code of Conduct

Members are expected to act respectfully and professionally, support the aims of the NEFHG, and contribute in good faith. The NEFHG values inclusivity, collaboration, and openness in all activities. Discrimination, harassment, or any other form of inappropriate behaviour will not be tolerated.

## Governance

### *The Committee*

The NEFHG will be managed by an elected Committee from its membership, comprising the following roles:

- **Chair** – Leads the group, represents it externally, and ensures effective meeting facilitation.
- **Secretary** – Organises meetings, maintains records, and manages correspondence.
- **Communications Officer** – Promotes the group, shares updates, and engages with members and partners.
- **At-large Members** – Up to two may be elected from each of County Durham and Tyne and Wear, with up to three from Northumberland. They are responsible for representing their county in group discussions and ensuring that local perspectives, needs, and opportunities are reflected in the group's initiatives and activities. At-large Members help maintain inclusive regional representation and may contribute to outreach, project development, or event planning relevant to their area. Where more than one At-large Member represent the same county, they will share a single vote between them.

If an undergraduate or postgraduate taught student is elected to the Committee, a second Committee member shall also be elected to that role to ensure continuity. This arrangement reflects the likelihood that students may relocate or otherwise step down before completing a full term. The paired appointment will allow for uninterrupted representation and the smooth continuation of Committee business.

*The Committee shall:*

- Consist of a minimum of three and a maximum of ten members.
- Serve staggered terms of three years, renewable by vote at the Annual General Meeting (AGM) or online, to ensure continuity and avoid all members rotating off at the same time.

### **Associate Members**

From time to time, the Committee may invite individuals to join as ad-hoc members to help with projects or activities. These members might bring useful experience, local knowledge, or fresh ideas to the table. These members are appointed by the Committee.

### **Voting**

Only Committee members hold voting rights on decisions concerning the group's operations and strategic direction. Associate Members may contribute to discussions and activities but do not hold voting rights.

### **Meetings and Communications**

- An AGM will normally be held each year to review the NEFHG's activities, set priorities for the coming year, and elect Committee members. An online ballot may be used, however, to accommodate the geographic spread of the membership. At the AGM, all members have the right to vote on Committee elections and on amendments to the Governance Document.
- Additional meetings or events may be convened during the year to address specific topics, projects, or collaborations.
- Decisions at meetings shall be carried by a majority vote of those present and entitled to vote.

### **Finances Matters**

- A Treasurer role is not required as the group does not require dues or handle regular funds.
- Any occasional financial transactions shall be managed collectively by the Committee.
- If the NEFHG begins to handle significant funds, this document will be revised to include a Treasurer role and related financial policies.

### **Affiliations**

The group will maintain formal connections with [Cemetery Research Group](#) and [Caring for God's Acre](#) to foster collaboration and mutual support. Additional organisations may be added as appropriate.

### **Amendments to the Governance Document**

This document may be amended by a two-thirds majority vote at the AGM, an Extraordinary General Meeting, or via an online ballot.

### **Adoption and Review**

This Governance Document was agreed by the Committee on 20 August 2025.

The document will be reviewed every three years, with the next review due in mid to late 2028 to correspond with the annual AGM.