

Arnos Vale Cemetery Trust Business Plan

April 2017- March 2020

January 2017

The Business:

Arnos Vale is a working cemetery providing a unique location for funeral services, burial and cremation plots, as well as a memorial to the citizens of Bristol who have died and been buried or cremated here in the last 175 years. In addition, it is a visitor centre attracting people who come to explore the 45-acre estate, enjoy the exhibitions, heritage, wildlife and historic listed landscape at Arnos Vale, participate in events, visit the gift shop and relax in the cafe.

The two Grade 2 listed Chapels and striking surroundings also make it a superb venue, unmatched in the local area for weddings, corporate hire, musical and theatrical event.

The Story:

Arnos Vale Cemetery is a magnificent 45-acre cemetery in the centre of Bristol. It opened in 1837, the same year that Victoria came to the throne. It is one of the earliest, best, and the only fully restored, example of a Victorian, Arcadian garden cemetery; it is universally regarded as leading the way for the curatorship of historic cemeteries in the twenty-first century. It is managed by Arnos Vale Cemetery Trust which, following a major restoration between 2005 and 2010, unveiled the revitalised Cemetery to the public in May 2010.

Arnos Vale Cemetery is now a national exemplar of how a decaying cemetery can be brought back to its former glory, providing new and exciting ways to engage visitors of all backgrounds and ages with a city's history.

It is a hugely significant place for Bristolians, who value it as a place of remembrance, an important working cemetery, a place of local heritage and historic importance, and a national centre for the education of life and death.

In 2010 Arnos Vale Cemetery Trust set of primary objectives towards which it agreed to work over and remain relevant to the new Business Plan.

Vision

Arnos Vale Cemetery will be a place of remembrance, recreation, heritage, wildlife and learning, which is sustainable, viable, and valued by all its stakeholders.

Primary Aims:

1. To re-establish Arnos Vale Cemetery as an established centre for life and death:
 - a. To promote Arnos Vale Cemetery as a working cemetery

- b. To establish a new Natural Burial area
- c. To lead in the knowledge development surrounding death and remembrance nationally
2. To manage and interpret the historic landscape and to enhance Arnos Vale Cemetery as a habitat for wildlife
3. To promote wide awareness of Arnos Vale Cemetery's social, historical, cultural, architectural & sculptural heritage
4. To develop a wide learning and events programme for children and adults
5. To continue the development of Arnos Vale sustainable commercial future for the cemetery
6. To develop Arnos Vale as a space for developing community and volunteer health and wellbeing.

Financial Targets 2017 to 2020:

To deliver this vision, the Trustees have agreed the following financial targets.

During the years 2017-2020, the Trust is prepared to invest in the future of the Cemetery by funding capital improvement from existing reserves

In the 2017/18 accounts the the Trust will be operating at a break-even level for the whole of its operations with 2018/19 seeing a significant operated profit boosted by capital investment in the Natural Burial Woodland, Café and Venue operations with Arnos Vale Cemetery Enterprises contributing £100K towards the running costs of the core cemetery and public engagement activities by 2020.

Three Year Business Goals 2017 to 2020:

1. Cemetery Services

Goals

Provide a wide range of cemetery services to meet customer demand and achieve primary objective 1 by making Arnos Vale a place of choice for funerals, burials and remembrance, generating annual revenue of £100,000 by March 2018.

Priorities

- Continue to raise awareness with the public that Arnos Vale is still a working cemetery, specifically marketing new burial plots available for sale, chapel facilities for funerals, memorial services and catering for after service receptions

- Establishment of a Natural Burial Ground in the Old Orchard by March 2018
- Digitise and make public the Arnos Vale Cemetery burial records

2. Public Engagement, Partnerships and Learning

Goals

Gain full museum accreditation and deliver a varied programme of learning, cultural and leisure activities to directly support Arnos Vale's charitable objectives (2, 3 and 4) and to encourage new and returning visitors to Arnos Vale.

Priorities

- Complete the Arnos Vale Museum Accreditation.
- Reach a break-even position in engagement from sales and funding/grants secured to support our ambitious programme of events.
- Gain a better understanding of current visitor data and plan systematic and prioritised data gathering from customers, visitors and donors during 2018-19 to set a robust baseline for visitor types and numbers and agree a strategy for encouraging year on year target increases.
- Establish a 'Life, Death and the Rest' event to provide an annual weekend of activity to focus on the death industry and increase the awareness of Arnos Vale as a national centre for the life and death industry.
- Build on Arnos Vale's growing reputation for excellence in school visits that support the national curriculum, further and higher education courses, and family audiences by increasing take up and refining formal and informal learning opportunities that engage schools, colleges, universities, independent researchers and adult learners with Arnos Vale.
- Manage a team of volunteer researchers, tour guides, student placements to deliver a wide-ranging research programme that is both pro-active in creating and discovering new information for interpretation and responsive to requests for information that will contribute to event programming and continuing to improve the visitor experience.

3. Fundraising

Goals

Develop a donor strategy to maximise unrestricted development revenue for project funding in the 18/19 financial period

Priorities

- Establish an Arnos Vale membership scheme priced at £20 for the year with automated CRM integration and easy management to complement the Friends Scheme by March 2019
- Integrate a donor CRM into the main operating Arnos Vale CRM
- Develop existing and new relationships with key trust and HNI to develop phase 3 of the matched funding for the museum development.
- Continue to apply to relevant major trusts which do not permit applications for endowments with a view to submitting revenue and or small capital applications to support fundraising and other core costs in support of (Aim 5 & 6)

4. Landscape Development

Goals

Deliver a fully costed three-year landscape and site management plan, which is committed to the environmental and economic sustainability of Arnos Vale Cemetery.

Priorities

- To complete the programme of capital improvements identified for 2017-2020 to the agreed timescale and within budget, continually looking for opportunities to use pro-bono help, volunteer support and external funding which may become available during the period.
- Conduct a review of the existing Landscape Management Plan to include updating ecological surveys and to reflect progress to date, current and future needs of the Cemetery as well as good practice in conservation, biodiversity and health and safety.
- Grow capacity within landscape volunteers team to enable Arnos Vale Cemetery Trust to effectively deliver the landscape aims.

- Implement a seasonal landscape plan for Ceremonial Way and develop a communication plan so that Trustees, staff, volunteers and the community have a good understanding of the seasonal grass policy.

5. Arnos Vale Enterprises

Goals

Contribute to the financial sustainability of Arnos Vale Cemetery by achieving annual profit of £100K by March 2020 contributing 40% to the Cemetery Trust running costs. This will be achieved through a combination of high quality offers, services and facilities, sympathetic to the ethos of the Cemetery, and by delivering an excellent customer experience across a range of enterprise activities.

Priorities

- Develop and deliver a business-to-business sales and marketing strategy that targets and attract corporate clients to use Arnos Vale as their chosen venue for events such as team building days, conferences, meetings and other business functions in 2017/18.
- Develop the wedding business sales and marketing strategy that encourages initial enquiries and aims to achieve a conversion rate of 30% of initial enquiries and reaches 50 weddings by 2020.
- To increase the revenue from public events including theatre/music/arts and key date celebrations.
- To develop an automated feedback system and Net Promotor score for business events.
- To improve the catering offer at Arnos Vale by capital project implementation of Spielman terrace covering to generate 50K of additional revenue in 2018/19.
- To create an open plan gift shop space in the existing visitor centre to increase revenues to £15K in the 17/18 period.

6. Volunteer Development

Develop Arnos Vale as a space for community and volunteer health and wellbeing installing a Green Gym network with local GP practices, developing volunteer working areas and signposting target groups to wellbeing activities at AV.

- Create additional volunteer workshop space for the community and volunteer and develop a training program for groups identified at need.
- Development of GP referral scheme for outdoor activity for the community to provide health referral activity
- Improve volunteer communication strategy and signposting around site and on social media.

Capital Investment and Organisational Development

In order to achieve business plan priorities for 2017-20 a number of capital projects have been identified as fundamental to Arnos Vale's growth. Projects have been prioritised and costed on the basis of:

- **Opportunities to generate/increase income for Arnos Vale Cemetery Trust;**
- **Improving operational conditions.**
- **improving safety and access for visitors to Arnos Vale.**

The total Capital Investment programme over the three years will require funding of more than £100K with the major project entitled '**Fit for the Future**' as Arnos Vale establishes the long term sustainable future '**Forever, For Everyone**' and will enhance the links between (Aims 2-6) with both access, volunteer development and the commercial sustainability of the charity. These have been included in the financial projections as calculated depreciation where grant funding is the approved source of financing, matched from operating funds where possible.

Phase 2 of the project will focus on the development of a new 2 floor visitor centre and museum to be located in the white wall and wet room space to the left of the Spielman Centre

Fit For the Future

1. Terrace covering and café operation

The Arnos Vale café is limited to 6 tables when the weather is inclement which endangers the profitability and viability of the café specifically between October and April as visitors are turned away. The implementation of a café terrace cover means that 40 additional covers can be utilised during wet days. The expected revenue uplift will be in the region of 25% in the period 2018/19 with an NPV return on investment of under 4 years. The Café doors are also not fit for purpose with no access to the back kitchen and doors that swing the wrong way these will be addressed with the

terrace improvements to endure the maximum operating efficiency between the kitchen and the front of house, required to manage the additional 40 covers.

2. AV System in the Spielman Centre

Arnos Vale has lost numerous bookings due to the AV system in the Spielman, the main function room space. The large high Windows are one of the draws for certain bookers but training and corporate meetings the light also causes problems due to inability to see the projector. The solution is to install a combination of blackout blinds to the windows (something thought about in the original build with cabling already in place to the top window). This will work in combination with a new higher specification AV system to create a multipurpose booking space for more events and corporate bookings including Daytime family cinema. We anticipate an additional £10-15K of associated revenue in 2018/19 at an installation cost of £10K and NPV payback in 1.7yrs.

3. Visitor Centre and Exhibition Access

Arnos Vale currently has no access ramps to the visitor centre, gift shop and exhibition. To enable entry for visitors with access needs to utilise the centre, Quentin Alder Architects have produced plans for stone heritage ramps with consultation through Historic England. This will allow visitors and cemetery enquiries to gain access to the Visitor Centre offering a key aim of Public Engagement at an anticipated cost of £12K.

4. Signposting and Walkthrough Videos

The introduction of the new woodland health walk and Community Garden meets our aims (2,3,5 &6). To ensure the community uses the spaces new signage and re-vinyling of existing signage needs to be undertaken along with the development of walkthrough videos to signpost the areas branding needs to be agreed to ensure we communicate well and present a coherent and consistent image with an estimated cost of £2K

Visitor Centre and Museum

The Visitor Centre and Museum development will form phase 2 of the 'Fit for the Future' project as a standalone entity. The museum will be a centre for the history and future research of Death and memorialisation displaying both local and national history surrounding death and memorialisation but also the growth of the movement nationally and internationally.

Museum accreditation (Aim 3) will work concurrently with the development working under the mentorship of Bristol Museums. There will also be a better placed visitor centre and gift shop and additional venue hire space providing a new smaller meeting room space. The existing East and West lodges will be transformed into improved working space for staff with the East lodge developed for volunteer research, workshop space and volunteer room.

Initial application will be made to the HLF in 2017/18 period concurrently with an application to the Museums Association (MA). The second Phase expected to be up to £20K in the 18/19 period will

be funded through application to the Quartet Community Foundation and partnership with the University of the West of England School of Architecture who have shown interest in supporting the project.

Final phase funding will need to be matched and fundraised through work on (Aim 4) with grant partnerships expected from a range of sources including the HLF and Arts Council. The final project cost is estimated in the region of £3million and ensures that Arnos Vale will continue to operate sustainably with an operating profit **'Forever, For Everyone'**

Alongside **'Fit for the Future'** Arnos Vale also has some projects which were not completed in the 2014-17 plan which the Board believes should be carried through to the 2017-20 plan

Top Lodge

Formerly home for the cemetery superintendent, this building has been derelict for a number of years. In October 2009 the Bristol Buildings Preservation Trust carried out an options appraisal in order to propose new uses for the building and the repairs required. The estimated cost of repairs at that time was £200K and the proposed use was for a cafe on the site. Now, 4 years on in the development of Arnos Vale and its ambience, as well as very different market conditions, it is appropriate to re-visit this project and carry out a study to look again at options for future usage of the space and the capital investment needed. If funding cannot be found then safely bringing the lodge to the ground becomes the only viable option at a cost to £15K in the operating capital.

Woodland Burial

Advice gained from the Association of Natural Burial confirmed that there is little regulation currently in this aspect of cemetery services. However, the steep slopes in the Old Orchard currently make access difficult and a Forestry Commission Woodland Improvement Grant for £9600 has been awarded to introduce pathways and steps around the boundary and into the area making it accessible to the public, families and the funeral profession. The additional cost to Arnos Vale Cemetery is estimated to be £30K. This work is to be carried out in the 17/18 period with funding from the Quartet Community Fund and expected NPV payback of 3.2years.

Infrastructure

To enable the operation to work at maximum efficiency, Fibre cabling needs to be installed into the cemetery to improve upload and download speeds. This will enable servers to be moved to the Cloud for faster performance and maximise data security. This will be linked to a new telephony infrastructure at Arnos Vale ensuring that opportunities that are lost with the current system are remedied with signposting and call monitoring to improve efficiency.

Organisational Development and Growth



Arnos Vale Cemetery Trust has been through significant stages of development and change since the restoration project began in 2007. The approach since the re-launch of Arnos Vale in 2010 has been to develop the organisation incrementally and to empower the team to develop innovative ideas, make decisions and evolve processes and systems to support work priorities. This has worked well, resulting in many successes as well as creating opportunities to develop in the future. The organisation during that time has grown and become more complex. This coupled with ambitious

plans for further development and growth means we now need to introduce robust management systems which support effective and efficient delivery of service as well as information to monitor and evaluate progress including new HR and H&S programme implementation

Robust Governance to ensure arrangements to rotate and refresh the Board of Trustees are in place and that Arnos Vale Cemetery continues to recruit trustees with appropriate skills and experience to govern and support the organisation.

Developing our People

The team of staff and volunteers should feel valued, supported and with the skills and capability to deliver the Arnos Vale Cemetery business plan objectives.

The introduction of an annual review and appraisal system with clear business and development objectives for all staff will help this. The Volunteer Co-ordinator and staff line manager will support volunteers to achieve their ambitions through volunteering at Arnos Vale as well as providing clear parameters on objectives for them to work within to help signpost those at need and work with GP practices on our Green Gym aspirations.

Customer Relationship Management

The identification and development of a cloud based CRM to hold all contacts and track relationships with visitors, customers, stakeholders and suppliers is planned for 18/19 to integrate with the website. A marketing and communication plan needs to be developed utilising both the on and offline tools available including Business-to-Business and Business-to-Customer marketing plans across each area of the total Arnos Vale Cemetery entity.



Appendix 1: Arnos Vale Budget Projections 2017 - 2020

All values in £'000s	2017/18 Budget			2018/19 Budget			2019/20 Budget		
	Core Activities	Restricted Funds	Total	Restricted Funds	Catalyst	Total	Restricted Funds	Catalyst	Total
Income									
AVCE	179.0			190			210		
Cemetery Services	99.5			105			90		
Public Engagement	18.0			18			18		
Total Commercial Income	296.5	-	296.5	313	-	313	318	-	318
Income from Endowment Fund at 3.5% pa	66.2		66.2	66		66	66		66
Restricted Funds Balances b/fwd			-			-			-
New Restricted Funding Received		17.7	17.7			5			5
Unrestricted Funds			-			-			-
Donations	15.0		15.0	20		20	30		30
Legacies			-			-			-
HLF Match Funding			-			-			-
Total Income	377.8	17.7	395.5	399	5	404	414	5	419
Running Costs									
AVCE (including transferred in salary costs)	115.9		115.9	119		119	120		120
Cemetery Services	39.4		39.4	44		44	45		45
Public Engagement	23.9		23.9	25		25	26		26
Expenditure on restricted funded projects		17.7	17.7			5			5
Catalyst Fund Raising Costs			-			-			-
Estate Services	98.7		98.7	104		104	104		104
General Overheads (net of transfers)	95.6		95.6	101		101	101		101
Staff Costs	241.8		241.8	249		249	252		252
Staff Costs - Transferred to specific cost centres	(241.8)		(241.8)	(249)		(249)	(252)		(252)
Total Costs Incurred	373.4	17.7	391.1	393	5	398	396	5	401
Operating Surplus/(Deficit)	4.3	-	4.3	6	-	6	18	-	18