

**REPORT TO: PORTCHESTER CREMATORIUM JOINT COMMITTEE -
Monday 13 December 2021**

REPORT BY: THE HORTICULTURAL CONSULTANT

CREMATORIUM GROUNDS – GENERAL UPDATE

1. We are now into winter and the gardens have taken on a more subdued appearance; maintenance works are continuing including pruning. The staff have completed additional grass cutting due to the mild weather this autumn and continue to clear the leaves from the grass areas and paths.
2. Spring bedding and bulb planting has now been completed with additional bulb planting in the rockery around the pond area. Shrub planting has also been completed around the grounds replacing any shrubs that have died or require replacement.
3. Four replacement trees and some shrubs have been purchased to replace trees that will be removed following the tree report survey, mentioned below.

Tree Sculpture Carvings

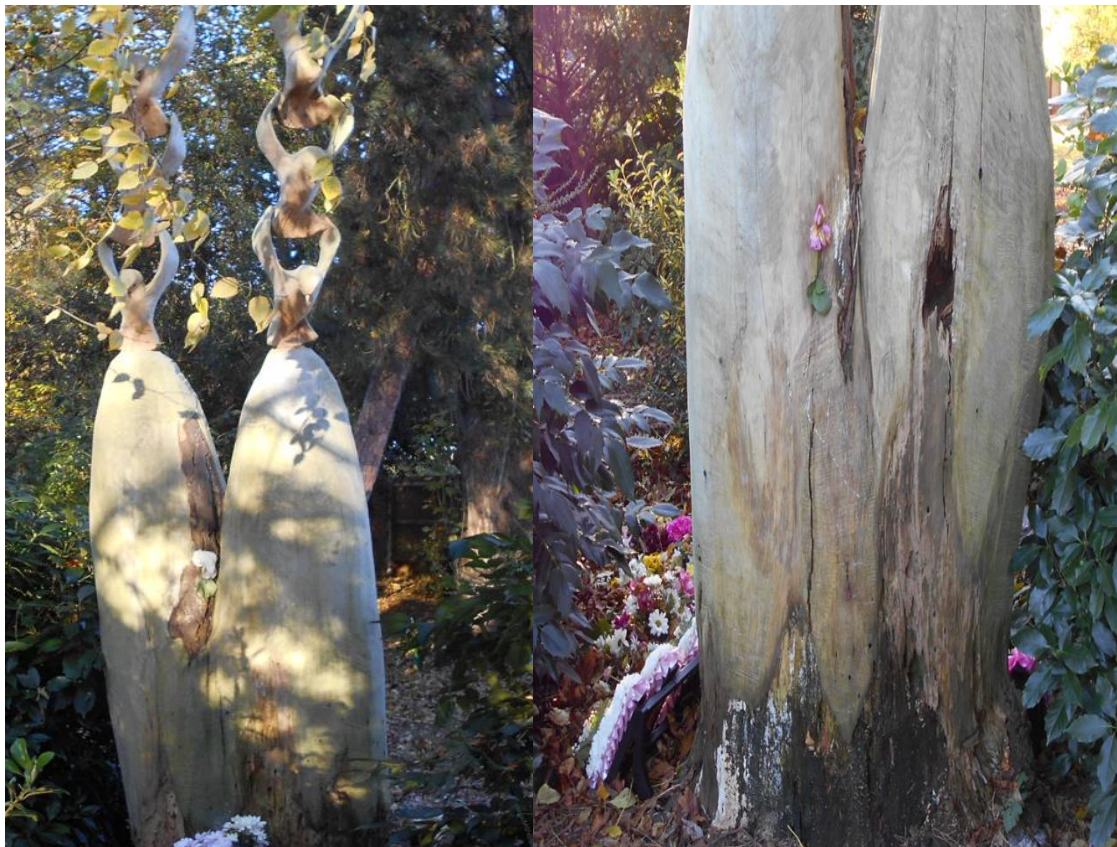
4. Following concerns, the Crematorium Manager and I together with the tree officer, inspected the carved wood sculptures in the garden and sadly the assessment is that they are getting to the end of life due to rotting out from the base (see photos below). They were carved from trees stumps left following tree felling approximately 14 years ago.



Carving 1



Carving 2



Carving 3

5. As can be seen from the photographs above the tree stumps are in quite a bad condition rotting out from the centre and will require removal in the near future.
6. These are quite sensitive and are a focal point for many. **There are a couple of options when they are removed, which the Joint Committee is asked to consider, as follows -**

- (a) New trees could be planted in the vicinity but not necessarily in the exact same location.
- (b) Alternatively a quotation has been obtained from a local wood sculptor to replace or repair the existing, as follows -
- Wood carving 1 would be replaced with a new sculpture in the same position sunk into the ground.
 - Wood carving 2 would be replaced with a new sculpture in the same position sunk into the ground.
 - Wood carving 3 would have the tops removed and attached to a new base in the same position.

Tree report

7. The full 4 yearly tree survey report was carried out recently. This has highlighted that some tree works including pruning are required. A number of trees that are either dead or diseased will require felling – a total of 19 mostly small trees. I inspected these with the Crematorium Manager and we have agreed some tree or shrub replacements as close as possible to the tree being removed. Unfortunately, we cannot plant in the exact location due to tree roots.
8. Two of the trees that are due to be felled have been identified as possible examples that could have new carvings. They are both substantial trees - one in the north border and one behind the book room, shown in the photographs below.



North Border



Behind the Book Room

9. The quote received from Chris Bain is for a total of £4,600 for replacement / repair of existing and new carvings on the trees above. All would be in keeping within the gardens owls, other birds, squirrels etc. Some examples of his work can be seen below, and there are a lot more examples on his website.



- 10. Members' views are sought on how they would wish the Joint Committee to proceed with this potentially sensitive issue.**

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