



**1 WOODFIELD VILLAS  
BOSTON CASTLE GROVE  
MOORGATE  
ROTHERHAM  
S60 2BB**

01709 361861  
janetrworrall@tiscali.co.uk



[www.fobcap.org.uk](http://www.fobcap.org.uk) [www.moorgatecemetery.org.uk](http://www.moorgatecemetery.org.uk)

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10<sup>th</sup> March 2011

Councillor Jahangir Akhtar

Rotherham MBC

Dear Cllr Akhtar

### **Moorgate Cemetery Offices and Workshops**

In advance of the Cabinet meeting which will include making a decision on the sale of the workshops and old offices in Moorgate Cemetery, I am writing on behalf of the Committee to express our disappointment at the Council's nearsighted approach.

The Friends Group was formed in 2002 to work alongside the council to improve the facilities and environment in Boston Park and Moorgate Cemetery, which at the suggestions of English Heritage could form a heritage trail around both historically important sites.

With regard to Moorgate Cemetery, we initially formed a partnership with the Probation Service and implemented a work plan for them, the first one of which was rebuilding part of the cemetery wall between Moorgate Cemetery and Boston Park.

In order for things to progress in this respect, we had to supply the probation service with a facility whereby they could have the use of a toilet and a refreshment break.

As the workshop/office were in a very poor state of repair, I wrote to a number of window companies and Mike Yarlett, MD of Yorkshire Windows very kindly provided us with all the windows and doors necessary to make the building safe and secure and the probation service duly installed these.

The Council paid for the necessary work on the roof and the probation service tiled the floor and painted and decorated the building internally.

**PATRON: LORD D P M A HOWARD**

**CHAIR ANDREW EMERY : SECRETARY JANET R WORRALL : TREASURER - KEITH GRAVIL**

Since that time, the probation service has carried out further work on the boundary wall and also cleared encroaching ivy and cleaned and made safe the footpaths and a firm relationship between the Council, the Friends Group and the Probation Service has been established.

Whilst I do appreciate these are austere times, I think that the Council is taking a short term view of things. The Council's policy is now about asking Groups to take more responsibility for themselves, however historically Groups like ours have been doing exactly that for a number of years.

For your information the Council used the work of the probation service as match funding in last year's aborted Boston Castle HLF bid.

The probation service rates are:

The minimum wage per hour for estimates on the work done by offenders, is around £6 per hour .

Therefore, if there were 6 offenders per group and they would do 7 1/2 hours per day each, this would work out at around £270 per day.

Plus the supervisors time which would be £15 per hour so another £112.50

So, equivalent of £382.50 worth of value in labour terms for each working day

Whilst I do not expect the outcome of this appeal will prove positive, in view of all the hard work which we have provided on behalf of the Council and also Dignity, I felt that those who make decisions of this kind should be made aware of the circumstances and events in terms of effort and time by volunteers, necessitating this letter of appeal, which should not be dismissed by the Cabinet without due consideration.

Yours sincerely

Janet Worrall

Secretary Friend of Boston Castle and Parklands  
and Moorgate Cemetery