

## SNOWDROPS IN YORK CEMETERY

*Galanthus* is a small genus of about 20 species of bulbous perennial herbaceous plants in the Amaryllidaceae family. The plants have two linear leaves and a single small white drooping bell shaped flower with six petal-like tepals in two circles. The smaller inner petals have green markings.

Contrary to popular belief, snowdrops are not native to Britain. It's first known cultivation was in 1597 and it was first recorded in the wild in 1778.

Snowdrops will produce seeds provided there are pollinators such as early emerging queen bumblebees around. Generally, the bulbs multiply by splitting when dormant. Unlike other bulbs, which are planted whilst dormant, snowdrops are planted 'in the green' after flowering.

In the language of Flowers the snowdrop symbolises chastity, consolation, death, friendship in adversity, hope and purity.

According to superstition, although very pretty, a single flower indicates impending death and it should never be brought into the house. This is possibly as a result of its poisonous qualities

which provide a good defence against hungry deer grazing on the flowers or squirrels digging up the bulbs. It is also poisonous to humans.

Snowdrops and other plants from the Amaryllidaceae family contain a substance called galantamine. Galantamine was first used in Eastern Europe in the 1950's to treat memory problems. In 2010 its use was licensed by the National Institute for Clinical Excellence (NICE) as a medication for Alzheimer's disease under the name of Reminyl.

Since the 1950's Kew Gardens have been monitoring the growth of snowdrops. At that time they would generally appear in February. These days they are often found in early January, an indication of the UK's changing climate.

Avid collectors of snowdrops are known as galanthophiles.



Registered Charity  
No. 701091

This leaflet was produced by The Friends of York Cemetery a voluntary organisation supporting York Cemetery Trust in its management of the cemetery.

[www.yorkcemetery.org.uk](http://www.yorkcemetery.org.uk)

Designed by Dennis Shaw 2017

*Snowdrops*

*in*

*York*

*Cemetery*

*(Mid January to Mid March)*



This biblical symbol of  
Hope  
reminds us that Winter  
eventually  
gives way to Spring  
and announces the  
New Season



Approx. time  
At your leisure

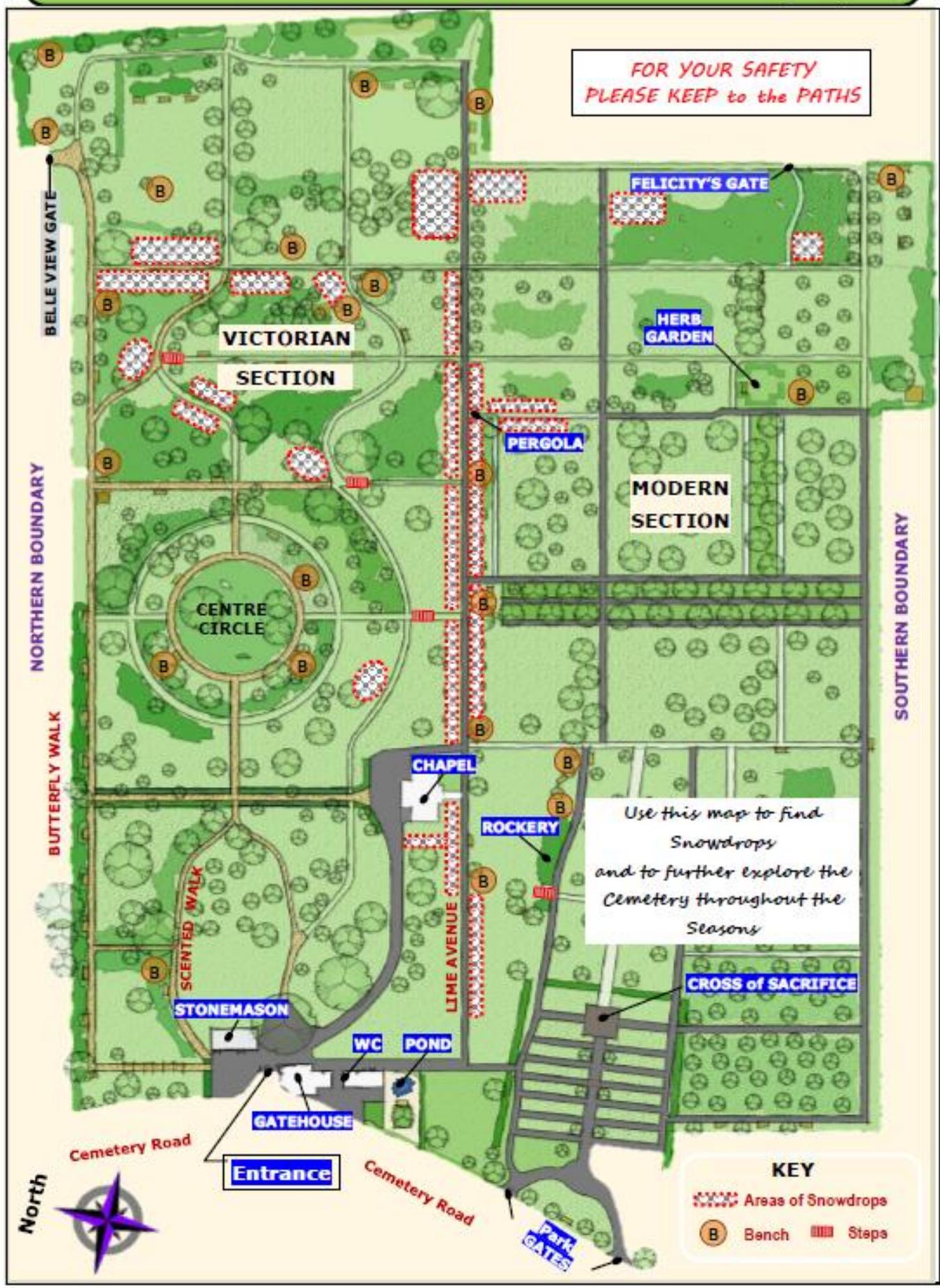
Friends of York Cemetery

# Snowdrops in York Cemetery



Regd. Charity No. 701091

**FOR YOUR SAFETY  
PLEASE KEEP to the PATHS**



Use this map to find  
Snowdrops  
and to further explore the  
Cemetery throughout the  
Seasons

**KEY**

- Areas of Snowdrops
- Bench
- Steps



Snowdrops in the Cemetery Trail Map (Dec 2017).docx