



# **ALBAN WAY**

## **GREENSPACE ACTION PLAN**

2019 – 2024

Produced by:



On behalf of:



## OVERVIEW

---

### Greenspace Action Plans

Greenspace Actions Plans (GAPs) are map-based management plans which specify activities that should take place on a site over a stated period of time; these activities will help to deliver the agreed aspirations identified for that site by site managers and stakeholders.

### Public Engagement

Engagement with stakeholders is at the centre of effective management planning on any site. An initial engagement period was held for 4 weeks in September 2018, to establish core aims and objectives for the site; these are reflected in Section 3. A second stage of engagement in April 2019 provides stakeholders opportunity to comment on the proposed management actions for the site. An engagement response document, published online as an appendix to this plan, will summarise any comments received and amendments made to the plan.

### Version Control

Version	Issue Date	Details	Author	Reviewed	Approved

# CONTENTS

---

<b>Overview</b> .....	<b>i</b>
<b>Contents</b> .....	<b>ii</b>
<b>1.0 Summary</b> .....	<b>1</b>
<b>2.0 Site Description</b> .....	<b>2</b>
2.1 Introduction .....	2
2.2 Geography and Landscape .....	6
2.3 History and Archaeology .....	7
2.4 Habitats and Wildlife .....	8
2.5 Access, Facilities and Infrastructure .....	10
2.6 Community, Management and Events .....	17
2.7 Improvements under the 2014-19 Greenspace Action Plan .....	18
<b>3.0 Aim &amp; Objectives</b> .....	<b>19</b>
<b>4.0 Management Prescriptions</b> .....	<b>21</b>
<b>5.0 Action Plans and Maps</b> .....	<b>24</b>
<b>6.0 Specifications</b> .....	<b>39</b>
<b>7.0 Appendices</b> .....	<b>41</b>

## 1.0 SUMMARY

---

### 1.1 Site Summary

Site Name:	Alban Way
Site Address:	Cottonmill Lane St Albans AL1 1HH
Grid Reference:	Cottonmill Lane entrance: TL 514905 206138 Smallford Station entrance TL 519852 207219 Boundary with Welwyn Hatfield TL 520426 207434
Size:	St Albans District Council section: 3.5 miles (5.6km) Total Alban Way length: 6 miles (9.6km)
Owner:	St Albans City & District Council
Designations:	Local Wildlife Site Conservation Area Metropolitan Green Belt

### 1.2 Vision Statement

The Alban Way will continue to be a welcoming, functional and popular multi-use route, forming an attractive option for non-motorised travel between St Albans, Hatfield and destinations along and beyond the route. The heritage, biodiversity and recreational assets that are features along the route will be protected and enhanced at all available opportunities.

The vision will be achieved through the following aims:

- Provision of clear and welcoming access to the Alban Way and throughout the site
- Ensuring that visitors to the Alban Way feel safe and able to enjoy the site at all times
- Maintaining a uniform and appropriate standard of vegetation management along the entire route
- Ensuring ongoing costs are sustainable, and external funding for capital works is secured where required
- Biodiversity and heritage along the route will be protected and celebrated
- Communities along the Alban Way will be supported and encouraged to increase their interaction with the route
- Promotion and awareness raising will increase interest in the Alban Way and highlight its benefits as a green transport corridor

## 2.0 SITE DESCRIPTION

---

### 2.1 Introduction

The Alban Way is a surfaced multi-use public route following the course of the former Hatfield to St Albans branch line of the Great Northern Railway. Following the closure of the railway in 1969 and removal of the rails, the trackside vegetation matured to become secondary woodland, creating an attractive and biodiverse linear habitat. Elements of the railway infrastructure remain including former platforms, halts and bridges, offering attractive glimpses of the route's heritage.

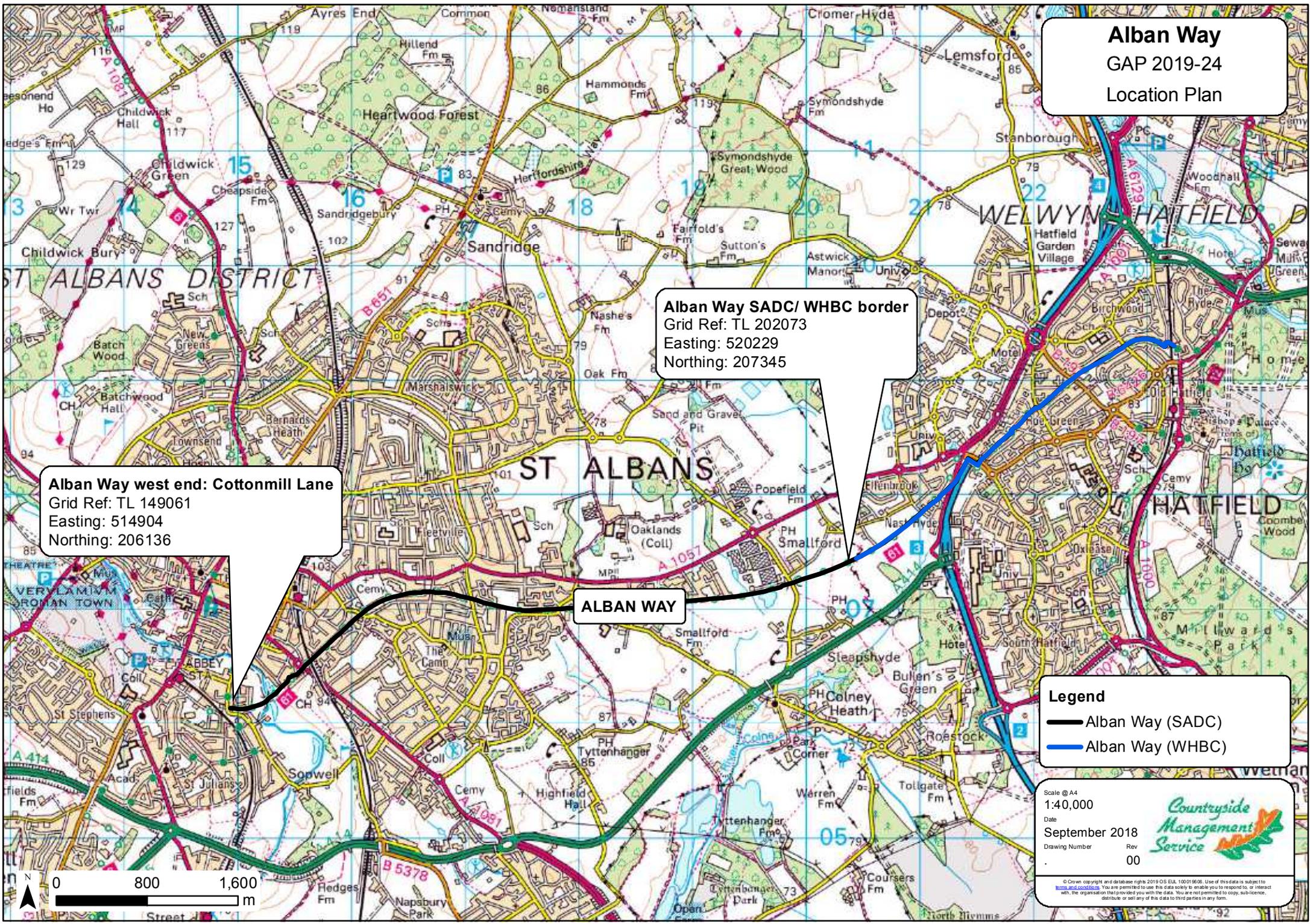
The Alban Way was resurfaced with tarmacadam in 2013, increasing its year-round functionality as a non-motorised travel route; it is an important link in the local sustainable transport network and forms a section of Route 61 of the Sustrans National Cycle Network. There are multiple access points along the route which link into the public Rights of Way network and other cycleways. Owing to its location and high quality surface, the Alban Way is an integral part of Hertfordshire's green transport network as identified in the A414 Corridor and LTP4 initiatives; it offers a convenient solution to separate cyclists and walkers from a busy road network where they would be exposed to poorer air quality.

The Alban Way is a popular route for both commuting and leisure, regularly used by pedestrians and cyclists alike. It provides links for many communities, schools and colleges, the University of Hertfordshire, and users of the train network accessed in St Albans and Hatfield. There are a multitude of greenspaces and footpaths which adjoin to the route, meaning people can combine use of the route with enjoyment of wider greenspaces.

The predominant habitat along the route is secondary broadleaved woodland, providing an important green corridor through an otherwise urbanised landscape. Mature trees, a healthy understorey and patches of open scrub and glades are key features that provide opportunities for a range of plants and wildlife to inhabit and move through the landscape. Lack of artificial light, as well as shelter from weather and industrial/ traffic pollutants, are key factors that make the Alban Way a valuable place for biodiversity.

A series of improvements were identified and delivered along the Alban Way through the previous iteration of this GAP. These provided much-needed enhancements to safety, habitat, access and information provision along the route. The achievements of the previous plan are summarised in section 2.7 "*Improvements under the 2014-19 Greenspace Action Plan*". The 2019-24 GAP aims to maintain these improvements, whilst also taking forward further opportunities that have been identified.

**Alban Way**  
**GAP 2019-24**  
**Location Plan**



**Alban Way SADC/ WHBC border**  
 Grid Ref: TL 202073  
 Easting: 520229  
 Northing: 207345

**Alban Way west end: Cottonmill Lane**  
 Grid Ref: TL 149061  
 Easting: 514904  
 Northing: 206136

**ALBAN WAY**

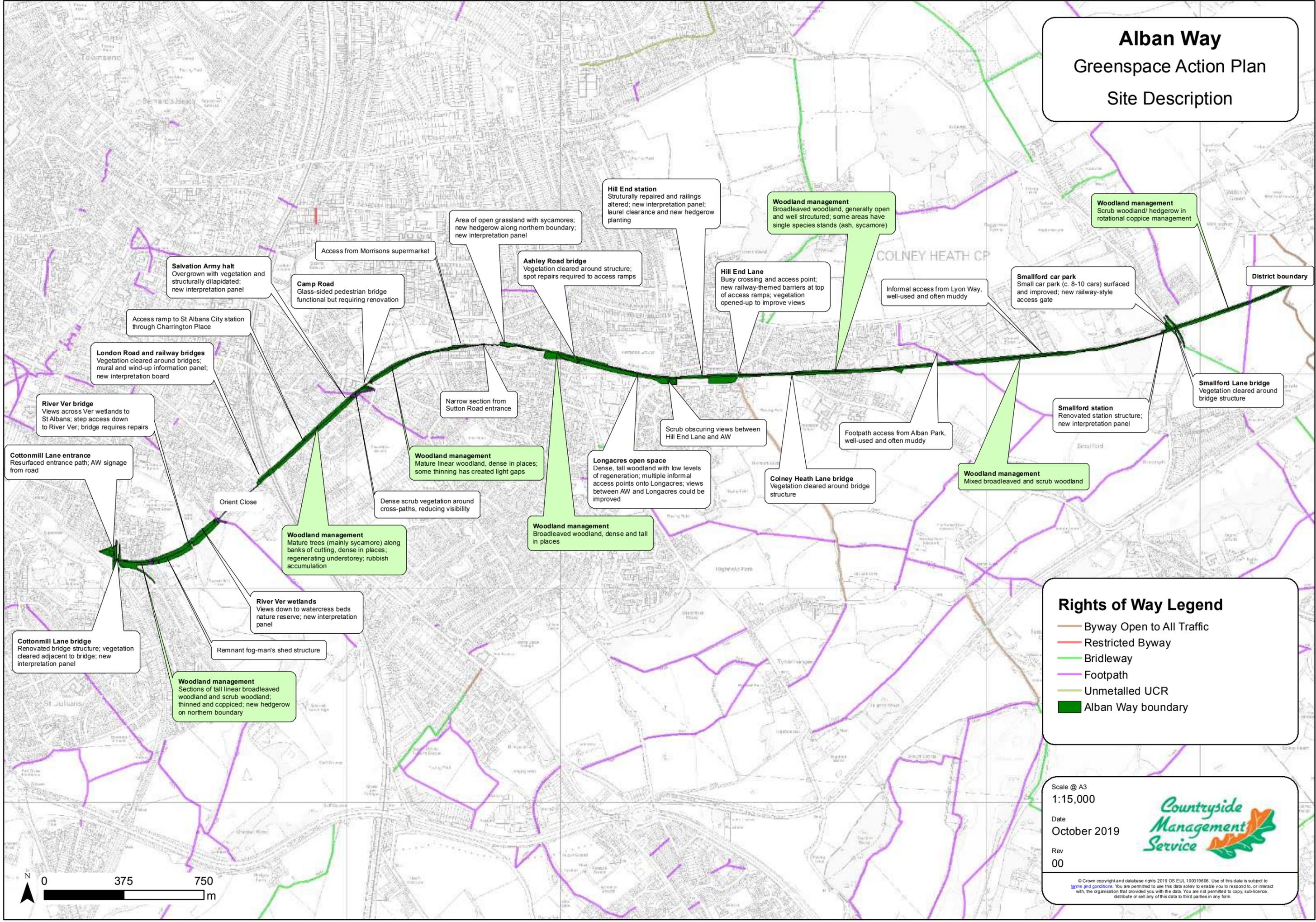
**Legend**  
 — Alban Way (SADC)  
 — Alban Way (WHBC)

Scale @ A4  
 1:40,000  
 Date  
 September 2018  
 Drawing Number  
 Rev  
 00



© Crown copyright and database rights 2018 OS ELL 100019806. Use of this data is subject to <http://www.nps.gov.uk> and <http://www.countryside.gov.uk>. You are permitted to use this data solely to enable you to respond to, or interact with, the organisation that provided you with the data. You are not permitted to copy, sub-license, distribute or sell any of this data to third parties in any form.

# Alban Way Greenspace Action Plan Site Description



**Salvation Army halt**  
Overgrown with vegetation and structurally dilapidated; new interpretation panel

**Camp Road**  
Glass-sided pedestrian bridge functional but requiring renovation

Area of open grassland with sycamores; new hedgerow along northern boundary; new interpretation panel

**Hill End station**  
Structurally repaired and railings altered; new interpretation panel; laurel clearance and new hedgerow planting

**Woodland management**  
Broadleaved woodland, generally open and well structured; some areas have single species stands (ash, sycamore)

**Woodland management**  
Scrub woodland/ hedgerow in rotational coppice management

Access ramp to St Albans City station through Charrington Place

**Ashley Road bridge**  
Vegetation cleared around structure; spot repairs required to access ramps

**Hill End Lane**  
Busy crossing and access point; new railway-themed barriers at top of access ramps; vegetation opened-up to improve views

Informal access from Lyon Way, well-used and often muddy

**Smallford car park**  
Small car park (c. 8-10 cars) surfaced and improved; new railway-style access gate

District boundary

**London Road and railway bridges**  
Vegetation cleared around bridges; mural and wind-up information panel; new interpretation board

Narrow section from Sutton Road entrance

Scrub obscuring views between Hill End Lane and AW

Footpath access from Alban Park, well-used and often muddy

**Smallford station**  
Renovated station structure; new interpretation panel

**Smallford Lane bridge**  
Vegetation cleared around bridge structure

**River Ver bridge**  
Views across Ver wetlands to St Albans; step access down to River Ver; bridge requires repairs

**Woodland management**  
Mature linear woodland, dense in places; some thinning has created light gaps

**Longacres open space**  
Dense, tall woodland with low levels of regeneration; multiple informal access points onto Longacres; views between AW and Longacres could be improved

**Colney Heath Lane bridge**  
Vegetation cleared around bridge structure

**Woodland management**  
Mixed broadleaved and scrub woodland

**Cottonmill Lane entrance**  
Resurfaced entrance path; AW signage from road

Orient Close

Dense scrub vegetation around cross-paths, reducing visibility

**Woodland management**  
Broadleaved woodland, dense and tall in places

**Woodland management**  
Mature trees (mainly sycamore) along banks of cutting, dense in places; regenerating understorey; rubbish accumulation

**River Ver wetlands**  
Views down to watercress beds nature reserve; new interpretation panel

Remnant fog-mar's shed structure

**Woodland management**  
Sections of tall linear broadleaved woodland and scrub woodland; thinned and coppiced; new hedgerow on northern boundary

**Cottonmill Lane bridge**  
Renovated bridge structure; vegetation cleared adjacent to bridge; new interpretation panel

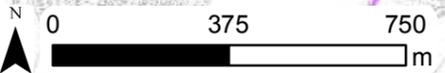
## Rights of Way Legend

- Byway Open to All Traffic
- Restricted Byway
- Bridleway
- Footpath
- Unmetalled UCR
- Alban Way boundary

Scale @ A3  
1:15,000

Date  
October 2019

Rev  
00



© Crown copyright and database rights 2019 OS EUL 100019606. Use of this data is subject to the terms and conditions. You are permitted to use this data solely to enable you to respond to, or interact with, the organisation that provided you with the data. You are not permitted to copy, sub-licence, distribute or sell any of this data to third parties in any form.

### Legend

 Alban Way boundary

### Site Type

 Wildlife Site

 Conservation Areas

 Greenbelt - March 2007

### Detailed River Network

#### River Type

 Lake / Reservoir

 Primary River

 Secondary River

 Byway Open to All Traffic

 Restricted Byway

 Bridleway

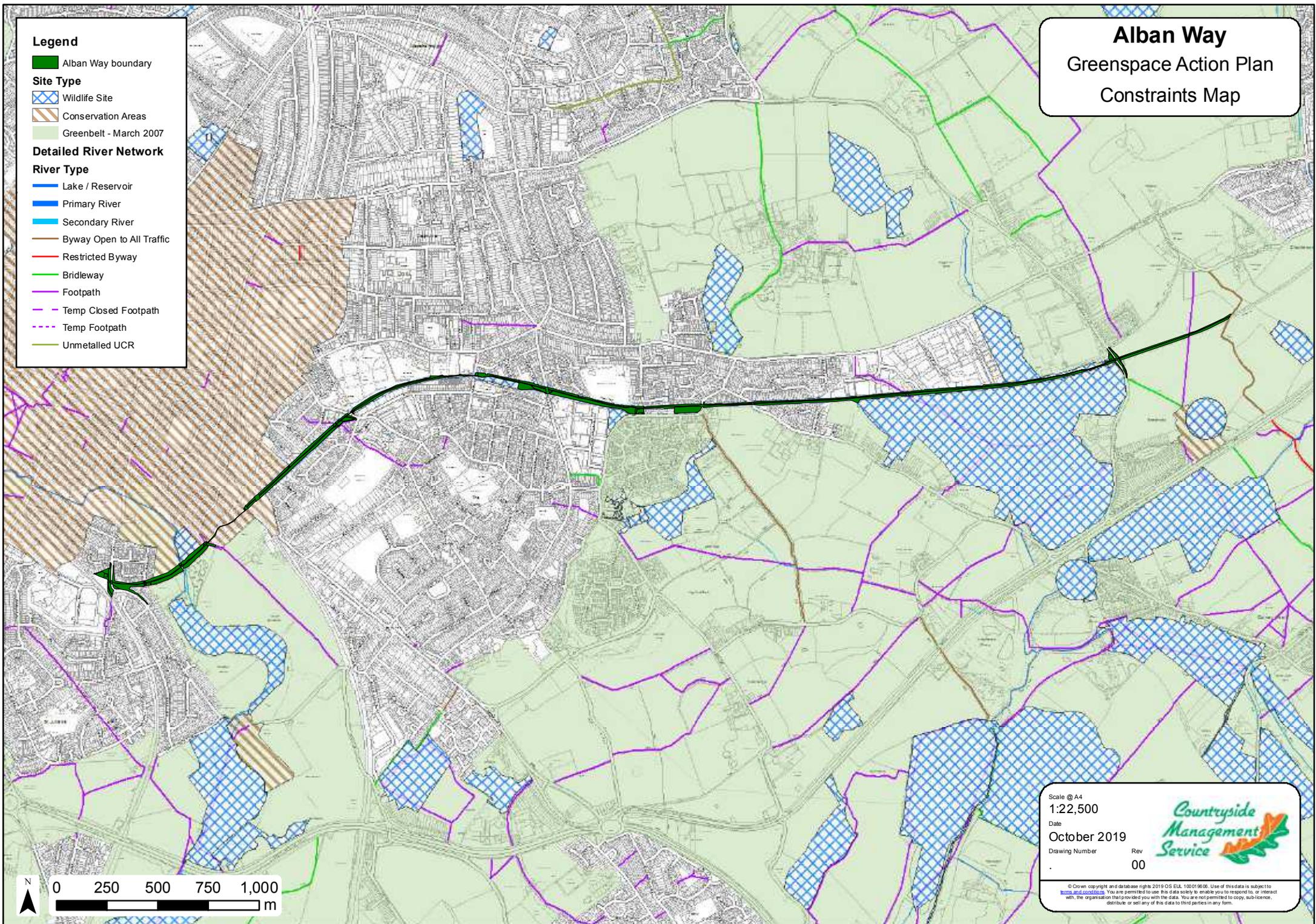
 Footpath

 Temp Closed Footpath

 Temp Footpath

 Unmetalled UCR

# Alban Way Greenspace Action Plan Constraints Map



Scale @ A4  
1:22,500  
Date  
October 2019  
Drawing Number  
Rev  
00



© Crown copyright and database rights 2019 OS ELL 100019806. Use of this data is subject to [terms and conditions](#). You are permitted to use this data solely to enable you to respond to, or interact with, the organisation that provided you with the data. You are not permitted to copy, sub-licence, distribute or sell any of this data to third parties in any form.

## CONSERVATION DESIGNATIONS

The conservation designations which are within the Alban Way boundary have some constraining influence on how the site is managed. Details of the conservation designations are listed in the table below, and annotated on the Constraints Plan.

Scale	Designation	Detail
County	Wildlife Site	68/044: Smallford Trail/ Alban Way Part of the Alban Way from London Road to Station Road is designated as Local Wildlife Site. Further Wildlife Sites are adjacent or near to the route, as shown on the constraints map.
District	Conservation Area	Sadleir Road to Dellfields: St Albans Conservation Area This covers all aspects of the landscape, including trees. Therefore, if any tree works are to take place along the route, a request must be made to the planning authority.
	Metropolitan Green Belt	Several sections of the Alban Way fall within the Metropolitan Green Belt, designated under PPG2 (Green Belts), which restricts the growth of development in strategic rural areas on the edge of conurbations.

## 2.2 Geography and Landscape

The Alban Way mainly follows the gentle contours of the local landscape, passing through urban areas of St Albans and Hatfield, and fragments of farmland in between these two conurbations. Cuttings and embankments are a dominant feature of the Alban Way, particularly further west along the route, offering both enclosed and elevated impressions of the local area.

The route-side habitat influences the atmosphere on the path. Vegetation is characterised by scrub and secondary woodland, and where the tree canopy has closed, dense shade is cast onto the path. At points along the line where trees have been removed through felling, open areas are present.

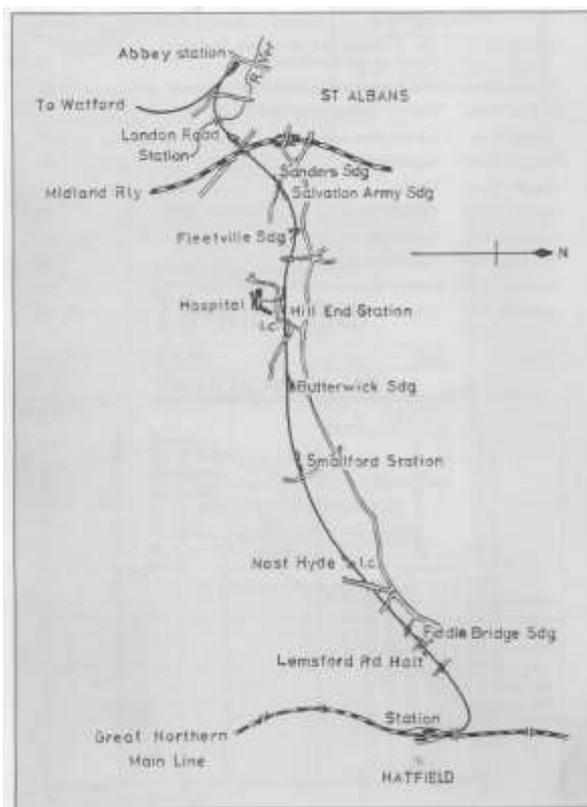
Land use adjacent to the Alban Way is varied, consisting of residential, industrial and green open space, with the Alban Way providing a consistent green corridor connecting these elements together.

The landscape around the boundary between St Albans and Hatfield is characterised by low hedges, scrub and standard trees amongst grazed and arable fields, providing a distinctively countryside feel. Grass verges are maintained on either side of the main path to provide a visually attractive and important wildlife habitat; in places, the verges contain neutral grassland plant species and tall herbs.

## 2.3 History and Archaeology

The Alban Way follows the route of the former Hatfield to St Albans branch line railway. Opened in 1865, the line connected the city of St Albans with the Great Northern Railway and to the wider national rail network. It was in use for passengers until 1951, and the final freight trains used the line in 1969, after which the track was dismantled. The privatisation of railways during the 1960's and increased use of the Midland Mainline for goods trains led to the route becoming largely redundant, and its closure followed years of financial loss.

The primary stations for the line were in St Albans and Hatfield. There were however a number of smaller halts along the route which served local communities and businesses. Within the St Albans section, small stations and halts included:



- Abbey station
- London Road station
- Sanders siding
- Salvation Army halt/ siding
- Fleetville siding
- Hill End station
- Butterwick siding
- Smallford station

Of these, the Salvation Army halt, Hill End station and Smallford station remain. The station structure was repaired at Smallford through delivery of the 2014-19 GAP, along with improvement of the adjacent car park.

### Smallford Station:

Smallford Residents' Association (SRA) was awarded an 'All our Stories' Grant from The Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) to support an

exciting local community project. Working in close collaboration with The University of Hertfordshire Heritage Hub, the project ran throughout 2013 with the purpose of researching the history of Smallford Station and the branch line it served (the Alban Way), and the impact the station had on Smallford community and the surrounding area. The findings were shared with the local community, and continue to be available at <https://smallford.org/>. A further beneficial legacy of the project has been the continuation of the Smallford Station & Alban Way Heritage Society.

Further associated projects are being considered by the heritage society, both at Smallford station and other heritage along the Alban Way.



*Restored station structure at Smallford*

## **2.4 Habitats and Wildlife**

### **2.4.1 Grassland**

Where open spaces have been maintained, such as verges and glades in the woodland, areas of neutral grassland exist with species including yarrow, field scabious, black knapweed, ox-eye daisy and birds-foot trefoil. These small areas are highly valuable for invertebrates, and site management seeks to protect and extend these where possible. Through the 2014-19 GAP, areas of scrub and woodland were cut as part of a rotational cutting regime, to open up further areas for grassland habitat growth. Opportunities can be identified to increase coverage of species-rich grassland in the 2019-24 GAP. In more shaded areas, nettle, willowherb and cow parsley grow, which provide habitat niches for invertebrates.

### **2.4.2 Trees, woodland and scrub**

Much of the route is lined with secondary broadleaved woodland, and cumulatively provides a substantial area of established woodland, particularly where it stretches up embankments and cuttings. Oak, ash, hawthorn, poplar, sycamore and cherry are the abundant species; trees are almost entirely self-set and distributed sporadically along the route depending on seed supply and germination.

The lack of management of the route-side woodland following rail closure allowed trees to become densely crowded, providing little room for growth and limiting light levels along the route. To address this, significant areas of tree thinnings were undertaken through the 2014-19 GAP, removing poor quality trees to improve route usability and woodland structure. This has an added benefit of proactively removing trees which are likely to present future issues, rather than requiring expensive reactive management. Management of the woodland will continue on a rotational basis, to achieve habitat variety and ensure each section receives attention within the timescales of a five year management plan.



*Example of pre- and post- woodland thinning works to increase light and views of bridge.*

The understorey contains a shade tolerant shrub layer of holly and hazel, with hawthorn and elder in lighter areas. Small patches woodland ground flora exist which is largely dominated by ivy along with species including dogs' mercury and bluebell.

Scrub is present along more open sections of the Alban Way, notably from Cottonmill Lane to Orient Close and at the eastern end of the SADC route. Blackthorn and hawthorn are key species, with elder, hazel and dogwood occasional, and climbing bramble, honeysuckle and ivy. This provides one of the most valuable habitats for wildlife. Rotational management of scrub vegetation commenced in the 2014-19 GAP, which began cutting short sections of the scrub to re-set the growth cycle and prevent succession to woodland; this also has the benefit of maintaining open views and light.

Rhododendron and cherry laurel growth occurs around residential zones, which is detrimental to the local environment and is being controlled as a priority.

### **2.4.3 Hedgerows**

Former hedgerows along the Alban Way, which would originally have been extensive, have largely grown into secondary woodland or been replaced by fencing. A short section which has been laid exists between Smallford station and the boundary with Welwyn Hatfield, and there is evidence of older hedges along Longacres and towards Cottonmill Lane.

A couple of short sections of species-rich hedgerow have been planted during the 2014-19 GAP, aimed to provide screening for adjacent properties and also wildlife benefits. Opportunities for further hedge-laying and planting are identified in the action plan below.

### **2.4.4 Rivers and watercourses**

A major watercourse associated with the Alban Way is the River Ver, which the route passes over via a large bridge near to the western end of the route; this location presents an attractive view of the river and wetland environment from the Alban Way. A stepped access links the Alban Way to the River Ver Trail at this point.

Amphibian and invertebrate species, including smooth newt and dragonflies, have been recorded along the Alban Way, indicating its benefit for wetland species for foraging and moving to other wetland sites, as noted below (wildlife).

## 2.4.5 Wildlife

### Birds:

The Alban Way provides a woodland and scrub corridor which is used by a variety of common and widespread species which are typically associated with gardens and woodland. Flocks of tits and finches are regularly seen, together with thrush species, robin, dunnoek, wren, and warblers such as blackcap and chiffchaff. Migrant species including whitethroat can be seen or heard during summer, as well redwing and fieldfare during winter. The section of the route passing through farmland at the eastern end of the route provides opportunity to see and hear skylark and yellowhammer in summer.

### Mammals:

The linear woodland allows mammals to live along the Alban Way and use it as a transport route to move between other areas of habitat. Red fox, hedgehog, badger and mole have all been recorded, and wood mouse, brown rat and field vole are likely inhabitants.

The route provides a valuable resource for bats, as the primary east-west habitat corridor through the urbanised St Albans landscape. The majority of our native bat species are reliant on dark, tree-rich habitats for foraging, roosting and moving through the landscape. Areas of open ground and artificial light are often avoided. Pipistrelle, brown long-eared, Daubenton's, Natterer's and noctule bats have all been recorded on or adjacent to the Alban Way.

### Amphibians:

Sections of the route near watercourses, around Smallford pits and the River Ver, provide good habitat for amphibians, and records adjacent to the site include smooth newt, common frog and toad, and great crested-newt. Many amphibian species, particularly great-crested newts, use woodland and hedgerows for moving between wetland sites and for over-wintering.

### Reptiles:

Slow worm and grass snake have been recorded adjacent to the site.

### Insects:

A range of butterfly and moth species are commonly found using the habitats of the Alban Way during spring and summer. Pollinating insects such as bees and hoverflies use the site for foraging and over-wintering, whilst damselflies and dragonflies are regularly sighted hawking along the route

## 2.5 Access, Facilities and Infrastructure

An access audit was undertaken as part of the 2014-19 GAP, to identify opportunities to provide high standards of access to the route to/ from neighbouring communities and locations. The various destinations along the Alban Way and linked to it are marked on the map at the end of this section.

### 2.5.1 Access and circulation

The Alban Way is not a designated Right of Way but has a permissive agreement in place from St Albans City and District Council and Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council, to allow access for walkers and cyclists, and horse-riders on sections of the route that are logistically suitable for horses.

The route is an important link in the local sustainable transport network and forms part of Route 61 of the Sustrans National Cycle Network. There are multiple access points along the route which link into the public Rights of Way network and other cycleways. Linking with the public transport network, a series of bus stops and routes are located near to the Alban Way, and three railway stations (St Albans Abbey, St Albans City and Hatfield) are only a short distance from the route.

#### St Albans Green Ring

St Albans [Green Ring](#) is a continuous walking and cycling route (approx. 9km/5 miles long) that encircles the city centre, linking local suburbs and surrounding parishes. At least 13 green spaces are connected by the Green Ring along with schools, places of worship, heritage sites, retail centres, leisure facilities and both railway stations in the city.

The route aims to make cycling and walking a sensible first choice for journeys within the city where previously a car would have been used. This will help reduce congestion and air pollution, and provide an attractive and easy option for people to increase their activity levels. The Sutton Road to Cottonmill Lane section of Alban Way forms around ¼ of the length of the Green Ring. Find out more about the Green Ring Project here: <http://www.stalbans.gov.uk/planning/Planningpolicy/greenring/default.aspx>

#### Wider cycling routes

In addition to the Alban Way and Green Ring, there are a number of off-road cycle routes and traffic-free cycle paths across St Albans that link into the Alban Way and surrounding areas. The context of the Alban Way in the local and regional cycle network can be viewed using the following resources:

[http://www.stalbans.gov.uk/leisure-and-culture/sports\\_physical\\_activity/cycling/](http://www.stalbans.gov.uk/leisure-and-culture/sports_physical_activity/cycling/)

<https://www.sustrans.org.uk/map-ncn>

### 2.5.2 Site entrances

There are multiple access points along the Alban Way, including both formally adopted and managed entrances, and informal 'desire lines'. An objective of site management is to ensure that the formal access points are kept in good repair, and the ability to enter/ exit the route at different points is promoted through relevant access maps and signage.

The main entrance points are summarised as follows:

- Cottonmill Lane Entrance (western limit/ start of the Alban Way)
- Smallford Station Entrance
- Charrington Place (for St Albans City station)

- From all main roads which cross or are crossed by the Alban Way: London Road; Camp Road; Sutton Road; Ashley Road; Hill End Lane; Colney Heath Lane; Station Road
- Alban Way: Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council asset (eastern end of site)
- Rights of Way: Footpaths 011, 012, 019, 060, 062, 063, 064, 065; Bridleway 002; and Byways 026 and 054

Additional entrances are from local green spaces, schools, industrial and residential estates.

### 2.5.3 Car parks and vehicular access

Motor vehicles are not permitted access to the Alban Way apart from authorised contractors and site owners/ managers. Lockable barriers were improved under the previous GAP to reduce likelihood of unauthorised access.

Authorised vehicles can access the Alban Way at the following points:

- Cottonmill Lane
- Orient Close
- London Road (no access from Camp Road)
- Morrisons supermarket car park (gated)
- Sutton Road
- Hill End Lane
- Station Road via Smallford Station Car Park

When accessing site, contractors are advised to enter at the closest point and exit at the next point along, to avoid turning around on the narrow site.

A small car park for around 10 cars was resurfaced and improved at Smallford Station, off Station Road, under the 2014-19 GAP. All other parking for the route is on local roads or nearby car parks.



*Improved car park and hedgerow at Smallford car park.*

#### 2.5.4 Path surface

The entire length of the Alban Way was resurfaced in 2013, providing a smooth tarmacadam running surface suitable for use in all weathers. The surface has lasted well to-date, requiring little upkeep and generally draining well. Minor imperfections are beginning to develop, mainly where tree roots are creating small mounds, which will be monitored and repaired where required.

#### 2.5.5 Park furniture

##### *Benches*

Benches are provided along the route and where present were renovated under the 2014-19 GAP. Replacement benches will be sought and provided along the route, at key destinations and resting places.

##### *Litter & dog waste bins*

There are seven litter bins and five dog waste bins along the route, which are emptied as required by SADC grounds maintenance contractors, who are also required to remove litter and fly tipping from Alban Way. An additional 2-3 bins will be sought for sections where bins are lacking and user numbers are high.

##### *Entrance barrier chicanes*

Where entrances are from the road network/ car parks, barriers were replaced under the 2014-19 GAP with bespoke wooden gates in a railway style. These incorporate a heavy-duty security bollard, to prevent unauthorised vehicle access, with a staggered chicane which slows cycles on approach to the road network.

Chicane barriers are not able to prevent motorcycles, as stopping these would also restrict horses, cycles, pushchairs and wheelchairs. Motorcycles are not currently considered a widespread problem on the Alban Way, and local Police Community Support Officers are consulted to keep tabs on this issue.

An existing metal chicane located on the access ramp to Charrington Place (the designated route to City Station) would benefit from a revision, to improve access for disabled users and adapted cycles.



*New entrance barrier chicanes*

## 2.5.6 Signage, interpretation and leaflets

### *Signage*

Signage is an important aspect of marketing the Alban Way, particularly where encouraging people to use the route for non-motorised transport. Signage along and connecting to the route was audited and updated as part of the 2014-19 GAP, including providing directions to/ from local destinations (as described on 'Destinations Map'). Maintenance of signage in good condition is important to ensure that users can readily navigate to/ from the site.

### *Interpretation*

The provision of interpretation panels on site was vastly improved through S106 funding under the 2014-19 GAP, proving popular with site users and interest groups. Using an attractive bespoke design and historical content provided by Smallford Station and Alban Way Heritage Society, the panels provide information at the following locations/ attractions:

Cottonmill Lane; River Ver and watercress beds; London Road station; Salvation Army halt; Fleetville; Hill End station; Smallford station, Butterwick.



*One of eight new bespoke interpretation installations*

Further interpretation that exists includes:

- A working historical windup interpretation panel on the Alban Way by London Road Bridge, which tells you about the history of part of the route with some historic recorded interviews;
- An interpretation panel on Longacres Open Space depicting the permissive path around Longacres open space;
- A mural depicting the history and modern life of the Alban Way painted by local people on the London Road Bridge, as part of a community day.

### *Leaflet*

There is an Alban Way leaflet detailing the whole route, its history, what to see and do, and contact details for organisations involved with the route. This will be updated and reprinted in coordination with the Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council section of the Alban Way, to offer a complete resource for site users. The current leaflet is available to download:

- SADC website - [www.stalbans.gov.uk/albanway](http://www.stalbans.gov.uk/albanway)
- CMS website - <http://www.hertslink.org/cms/getactive/cyclerides/albanway/>

Other leaflets that use or run near to the Alban Way include:

- Ver Valley Trail - Walk 6 The Two Cities Walk
- Abbey Flyer - The River Ver Walk
- Sopwell History Walks – Walks 1, 3, 4
- Hertfordshire Recreational Cycling Map
- St Albans City & District Cycle Map
- St Albans Green Ring
- The Abbey Way

### **2.5.7 Structures**

#### *Bridges*

There are eleven bridges on the St Albans section of the Alban Way. The five bridges that carry a public highway are in the ownership of Hertfordshire County Council. The four bridges that carry the Alban Way are in the ownership of SADC with safety inspections carried out by the respective owners every three years. The mainline railway line is owned by Network Rail.

#### *Blackberry Arch*

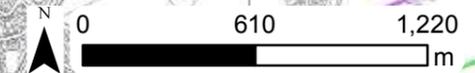
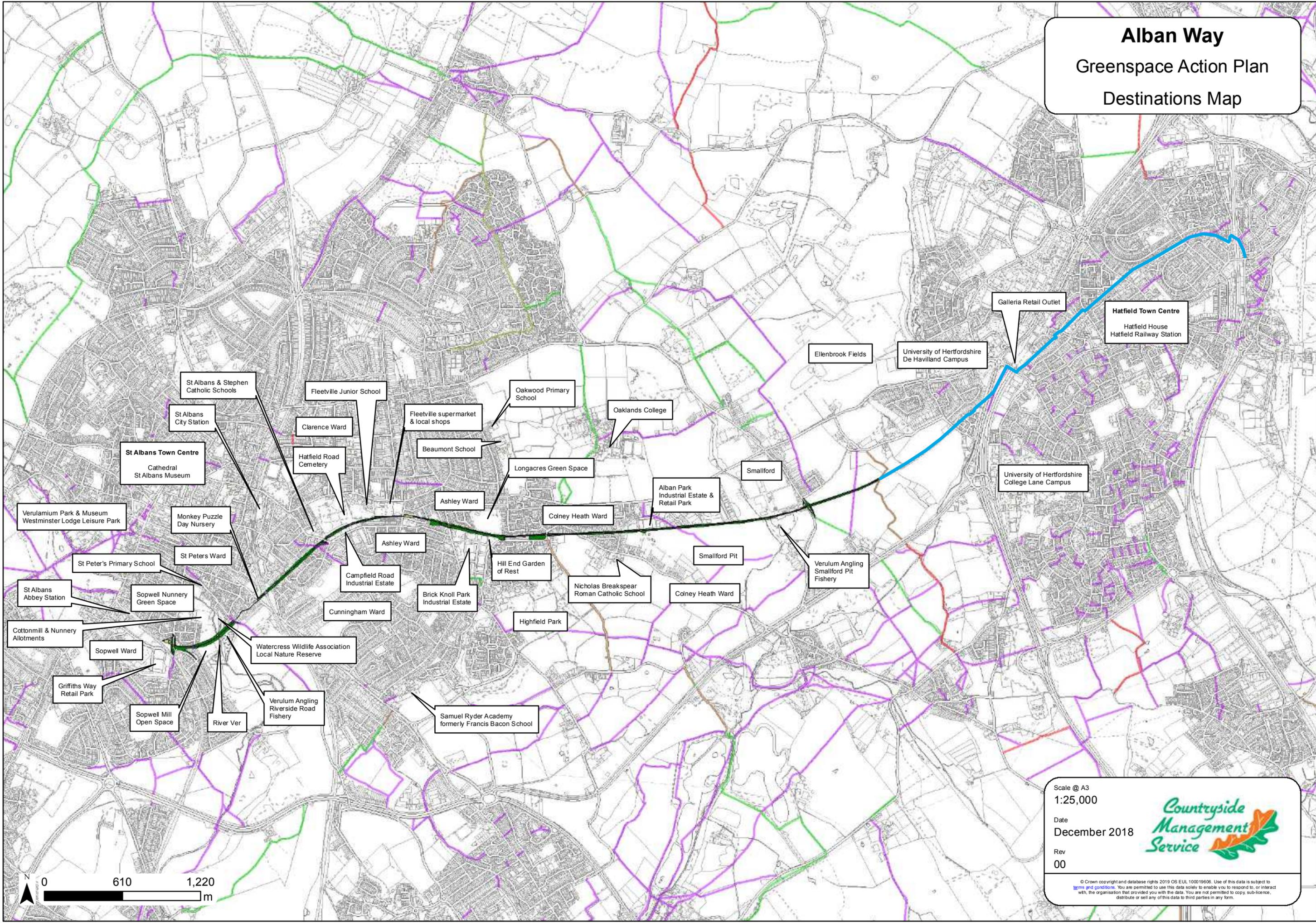
A metal blackberry arch sculpture, created by local sculptor Diane Maclean, is located on the section of the route between Smallford Station and the St Albans/ Welwyn Hatfield boundary.

### **2.5.8 Lighting**

Street lighting is not provided on the Alban Way at present, apart from a ¼ km section where the route passes through a residential estate (Orient Close). Woodland management works have targeted the thinning of route-side vegetation to increase daytime light levels. Usage by cyclists after dark currently requires use of lights (a minimum legal requirement for cycling at night).

*\*A proposal for installation of street lighting along a section of the Alban Way is currently being considered by SADC officers and cabinet members. The results of this, which will be due in the 2019-20 financial year, will be considered and incorporated into the GAP where possible. The design and specification of any additional lighting will be required to support the aims and objectives of the plan, including mitigating against wildlife disturbance and being achievable within ongoing maintenance budgets.*

# Alban Way Greenspace Action Plan Destinations Map



Scale @ A3  
1:25,000  
Date  
December 2018  
Rev  
00



© Crown copyright and database rights 2019 OS EUL 100019606. Use of this data is subject to the grid conditions. You are permitted to use this data solely to enable you to respond to, or interact with, the organisation that provided you with the data. You are not permitted to copy, sub-license, distribute or sell any of this data to third parties in any form.

## **2.6 Community, Management and Events**

### **2.6.1 Management**

Responsibility for management of the Alban Way sits with its owners, SADC, with day to day maintenance co-ordinated by the Parks & Green Spaces team at SADC. The regular maintenance works are currently carried out by SADC's grounds maintenance contractor John O'Connor. External contractors are employed to carry out larger and more complex works including tree works and surfacing.

Further management is carried out by the Countryside Management Service's volunteer group and Smallford Station & Alban Way Heritage Society. There are also regular volunteer efforts from local community and cycling groups.

Greenspace Action Plans (GAPs) guide the management of the route and are produced by the Countryside Management Service on a five-year basis. These are produced with the engagement of relevant partners, stakeholders and the local community. Stakeholders were asked to comment on a Briefing Document in September 2018, and on a draft version of this GAP in May 2019; all comments received have been considered and fed into this document.

### **2.6.2 Community involvement and events**

The Alban Way is a popular route used by a variety of groups, for walking, running, cycling and horse-riding. Hertfordshire Health Walks use part of the route periodically when leading walks from Highfield Park.

To date there has only been small scale volunteer involvement on nearby local Rights of Way leading to the Alban Way. Volunteer surveyors including a Community Horse Patrol and cycle cooperative regularly ride the Alban Way and report any issues to SADC and CMS.

The route has been used for various events, from guided walks by local history groups and the Countryside Management Service (CMS), to community events such as mural painting, fun runs and Get Active days.

## 2.7 Improvements under the 2014-19 Greenspace Action Plan

The Alban Way received a series of improvements throughout the St Albans section during the previous five year Greenspace Action Plan, 2014-19.

The main achievements are summarised here:

- Access to the route has been improved for users through enhancements and repairs to a number of steps and ramps, and renewal of entrance gates/chicanes.
- Directional signage to, from and along the Alban Way has been audited and improved to highlight destinations from the route via connecting paths and cycleways.
- Significant woodland and vegetation management works have been undertaken to:
  - Increase light reaching the path to improve visibility;
  - Encourage regeneration of grasslands and woodland understorey by coppicing vegetation;
  - Opening up viewpoints through rotational scrub cutting;
  - Revealing the routes heritage features including bridge structures and former platforms and halts.
- Heritage features have been restored including Smallford station platform and Cottonmill Lane bridge.
- Interpretation and marketing: A new logo was designed for the Alban Way which features on signage and information panels. Interpretation boards have been designed and installed to provide information about the history and wildlife of the site, and direct users to destinations.
- Road names and local destinations have been painted onto the path surface to assist with orientation.
- To advertise and facilitate use of the route, the Alban Way leaflet was updated to include the new logo and additional routes.
- Funding – Countryside Management Service (CMS) have been successful in securing more than £165,000 of external funding towards the above improvements. Funding for the work has come from developer contributions and UK government sustainable travel funding.
- Local communities have been engaged throughout the implementation of the GAP and joined in with voluntary activities and events, to help manage and monitor the route.

### 3.0 AIM & OBJECTIVES

---

The aim and objectives of the GAP are as follows:

#### Aim

To ensure the Alban Way maintains high standards of access, safety, user enjoyment and environmental quality, through upkeep of recent improvements and adoption of sustainable long-term management.

#### Objectives

- A. A welcoming and accessible place:** *Maximise public safety, access opportunities and user experience*
- **A1:** Maintain a high standard of access to, from and along the route, and identify opportunities for additional links with local destinations
  - **A2:** Ensure all signage to, from and along route is current and in good repair, and identify any further opportunities for interpretation or welcome signage
  - **A3:** Achieve and maintain a clean and tidy route
  - **A4:** Ensure surfaces, features and drainage are functional and in good repair
- B. Conservation and habitat management:** *Ensure habitats along the route are managed cost effectively and follow best practice*
- **B1:** Continue with a proactive woodland and tree management
  - **B2:** Continue rotational scrub and grass verge management, identifying opportunities for further habitat creation
  - **B3:** Identify and remove Invasive Non-Native Species (INNS) of plants, and replace with native species
  - **B4:** Implement monitoring of wildlife and tree diseases e.g. ash dieback; apply appropriate best practice if required in consultation with external experts
- C. Heritage and marketing:** *Continue to celebrate the route's heritage, and promote respectful and appropriate use*
- **C1:** Ensure historic features are protected and in good repair
  - **C2:** Ensure interpretation panels are maintained in good repair, and consider additional opportunities for information provision
  - **C3:** Promote responsible and respectful use through a focused campaign to encourage respectful shared use
  - **C4:** Update, reprint and distribute to local groups the Alban Way leaflet in conjunction with the Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council section

(Continued)

- D. Community involvement:** *Continue to develop and support an informed, involved and enthusiastic local community interest in the site*
- **D1:** Encourage the local community to become involved in the management of the site through operating towards the GAP objectives
  - **D2:** Develop opportunities for local community groups to produce relevant and appropriate art installations for the site
  - **D3:** Increase responsible and respectful use of the site through proactive response to misuse and anti-social behaviour, and building links with community groups, social workers and PCSO's
- E. Sustainable operations:** *All management and activities will be environmentally and financially sustainable*
- **E1:** Ensure costs of ongoing maintenance proposed in the GAP are sustainable and achievable with the financial resources available
  - **E2:** Seek external funding from grant bodies and development funds, to deliver proposed activities beyond annual maintenance
  - **E3:** Ensure all management is carried out according to environmental best practice, including on herbicide use, plant biosecurity, and sustainable woodland management practices

## 4.0 MANAGEMENT PRESCRIPTIONS

---

### A. A welcoming and accessible place

#### Paths and usability

- Route-side verges will be cut regularly from March to October to ensure that the managed width and height meets the standard set in the specification.
- Maintain small gaps in route-side vegetation on a rotational basis to provide adequate light levels.
- Drainage ditches, channels and culverts will be maintained clear and functional.
- Ensure tarmac surface is in good repair along the length of the route, including undertaking spot repairs and removal of significant tree root damage where appropriate.
- Regular litter picking and bin emptying, together with promotion of responsible use, will provide an attractive and safe site.
- Formalise access points at locations where required, including Longacres Open Space and Alban Park industrial area.
- Maintain all recognised access points in good repair.

#### Safety and security

- Review opportunities for increasing safety along sections of the route where threatening behaviour is an issue. Removal of inappropriate access points, sensitive vegetation management and installation of security features in key places will offer improvements.
- Inspect signage annually and maintain in good condition. Maintain road names/destinations painted on surface.
- Address where possible opportunities to improve user safety, such as sightlines with road network.

### B. Conservation and habitat management

#### Woodland and tree management

- Individual tree risk assessments and management, which have been carried out since the route was surfaced, will continue to ensure any high risk trees are identified and quickly dealt with. Trees encroaching into the 4 metre minimum standard of maintenance will also be removed under maintenance regime.
- Systematic woodland management commenced as part of the 2014-19 GAP, with the following aim:  
*Long term development of the woodland, to make it perform at its best for wildlife and people, requires felling of trees, restocking and re-establishing boundaries. It needs to take into account what the desired outcome of the feature is; for example, if managed correctly, a boundary can perform lots of different functions at once from providing an adequate screen, being*

*impenetrable, and providing a biodiversity habitat for wildlife. Once established, it is much easier and more cost efficient to continue ongoing grounds maintenance, flail or cutting once every few years.*

The tree and woodland management works carried out under the 2014-19 GAP proved successful in opening up areas for light ingress, preventing potential tree risks developing, and creating variety in the habitat structure. Through the 2019-24 GAP, the process will continue. Key areas where tree growth is dense and would benefit from targeted thinning, coppicing and/ or pollarding are identified on the Action Plan maps.

- Lack of diversity of native tree species is a considerable issue for many woodlands and wooded habitats across the UK, and is evident along the Alban Way. Low tree species diversity is an issue as it reduces woodland health and resilience, limits opportunities for wildlife, and potentially restricts supply of future mature trees.

Where appropriate, tree saplings of a range of native species will be planted to provide 'the next generation' of woodland. Species will be selected based on suitability for the site overall, tolerance for growth in shaded conditions, and considerations such as tree health. Trees are likely to be selected from oak, field maple, beech, lime, rowan, and willow.

#### Rotational scrub management

- Continue rotational scrub management, focusing on different sections to those managed between 2014-19. Select sections of over-mature scrub, cut and coppice to ground level to increase light and re-set scrub growth cycle.
- Where scrub regeneration would prove problematic or is not appropriate, take up opportunities for enhancement of other habitats such as grassland management, wildflower enhancement and specimen tree planting.

#### Invasive and non-native species

- Identify and remove Invasive Non-Native Species (INNS) of plants as a priority. Cherry laurel is a particular issue, including where it has been controlled and regrowth is occurring.

#### Monitoring wildlife and tree disease

- Support and liaise with wildlife monitoring groups to receive updated records for the area. Refer to up-to-date records to ensure proposed management is appropriate for recorded species.
- Monitor for tree diseases and health threats through annual tree inspections and ad-hoc surveys, in particular ash dieback and oak processionary moth. Apply appropriate best practice management, in consultation with external experts when required

## **C. Heritage and marketing**

### Heritage features

- Restore the Salvation Army halt through removal of vegetation, repairs to the structure and finishing features. Funding and labour provided by a local business sponsor.
- Continue to support Smallford Station and Alban Way Heritage Association in enhancing Smallford Station and surrounding area.

### Interpretation

- Inspect interpretation boards annually, and undertake cleaning and repairs as necessary.

### Marketing

- In conjunction with Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council, promote responsible use of the route. Delivery of a simple and effective campaign, with a clear message around respecting other users and user groups, will be conveyed on small signs at entrance points.
- Update, reprint and distribute Alban Way site leaflet in collaboration with WHBC.

## **D. Community involvement**

- Engage local communities and associated interest groups in management of the site through involvement in the GAP process, to identify issues and opportunities available.
- Support heritage interest groups in communicating the history and local context of the branch line, through on-site interpretation and events.
- Encourage opportunities for local community groups to produce relevant and appropriate art installations for the site
- Continue liaison with community protection officers to identify areas where safety is compromised. Respond accordingly and proactively to misuse and anti-social behaviour on the site. Maintain links with community groups, social workers and PCSO's

## **E. Sustainable operations**

- Ensure the costs of annual maintenance proposed in the GAP are sustainable and achievable with the resources available.
- Seek external funding from grant bodies, development and sustainable transport funds to deliver proposed actions beyond annual maintenance.
- Ensure all management is carried out according to environmental best practice, including relating to herbicide use, plant biosecurity, use of natural materials and sustainable woodland management practices.

## 5.0 ACTION PLANS AND MAPS

### Annual actions

Action	Obj. Ref	When	Responsibility	Funding	Est. Cost	Spec. Ref.	Status
Empty litter bins on weekly basis	-	All year	SADC	SADC GM Budget	GM Budget		
Empty dog waste bins minimum once a week or when required	-	All year	SADC	SADC GM Budget	GM Budget		
Regular management of route-side vegetation (maintenance) to a 4 metre wide and high standard.	-	April-Oct	SADC	SADC GM Budget	GM Budget		
Annual management of access points	-	All year	SADC	SADC GM Budget	GM Budget		
Annual management of vegetation adjacent to bridges	-	April-Oct	SADC	SADC GM Budget	GM Budget		
Annual management of vegetation and weed growth on and around restored stations/ halts	-	April-Oct	SADC	SADC GM Budget	GM Budget		
Leaf and debris clearance (2 no. per year)	-	Mid-Autumn; Winter	SADC	SADC GM Budget	GM Budget		
Inspect and maintain infrastructure (path surface) and furniture (benches, interpretation, barriers). To include cleaning and graffiti removal where required.	-	Inspect annually; repair	SADC	SADC GM Budget	GM Budget		
Tree risk management inspections, and incorporation into woodland management where possible.	-	Every 2 years	SADC	SADC GM Budget	GM Budget		

#### Abbreviations:

SADC – St Albans City & District Council

CMS – Countryside Management Service

SSAWHS – Smallford St. & Alban Way Heritage Society

GM – Grounds Maintenance

Vols – Volunteers

S106 – Section 106

STF – Sustainable Transport Funding

RoW – Rights of Way

## Year 1 actions

Action	Obj. no.	When	Responsibility	Funding	Est. Cost	Spec. Ref.	Status
<b>Site-wide actions</b>							
Repair missing letters from surface-painted road names	S1	All year	CMS	GM Budget			
Code of conduct: Review functionality of existing signs and bollards, and improve visibility where required.	S2	All year	CMS	Officer time			
Code of conduct: Respectful use campaign to provide reminders at key locations about shared use of the entire route.	S3	All year	SADC/ CMS	Officer time			
Undertake 'deep-clean' of rubbish and garden tipping	S4	Oct-Feb	SADC	GM Budget			
Garden tipping awareness campaign	S5	Aug-Mar	SADC	Officer time			
<i>Lighting proposal: Actions to be inserted if required following consideration by SADC.</i>		-	SADC/ CMS	Officer time			
<b>Area A – Cottonmill Lane to London Road</b>							
Woodland/ boundary management: Coppicing/thinning small trees and retaining standards; coppicing scrub; remove old fences & rubbish; planting native species	A2	Oct-Feb	CMS/ Vols	CMS vols work prog	-		
Fell 4 no. cherry trees encroaching route, to reduce issue and increase light to the north embankment	A3	Oct-Feb	CMS	GM/ External contractor	-		
Repair brickwork to coping and ends of bridge over River Ver. Re-paint bridge railings (black).	A4	April-July	SADC	GM Budget	£1,000		
<b>Area B – London Road to Camp Road</b>							
Woodland management – southern side of route, to increase light and remove/ coppice overhanging trees	B1	Oct-Feb	CMS	S106	£1,500		
Review requirement to install CCTV column and two lights on access ramp to Charrington Place (City Station exit)	B2	-	SADC	Community Protection	Subject to approval		
Revise chicane on access ramp and seek reduction in height of wall at base of ramp, to improve sightlines	B2	-	SADC	S106	£750		

Ensure metal railing fence is complete along southern boundary, to stop informal access routes	B3	Oct-Feb	SADC	GM Budget	-		
Rhododendron control – young saplings	B4	Twice annually	SADC	GM Budget	-		
Salvation Army Halt restoration: Vegetation and repairs	B5	Sept-Mar	CMS/ SADC	Local business	£6,000		
Vegetation clearance around cross-paths to improve visibility, street-light coverage and safety	B6	Sept-Mar	SADC	GM Budget	-		
<b>Area C – Camp Road to Ashley Road</b>							
Rhododendron control – young saplings	C4	Twice annually	SADC	GM Budget	-		
<b>Area D – Ashley Road to Colney Heath Lane</b>							
Review requirement to install CCTV under Ashley Road bridge	D1	May-July	SADC	Community Protection	Subject to approval		
Aftercare of new hedgerow and rhododendron control.	D7	Sept-Dec	SADC/ CMS	GM budget	-		
Ensure restored station structure remains weed-free and intact. 2 no. control visits.	D7	May, August	SADC	GM Budget	-		
Management of road verge – cut trees and scrub to ground level within 2 metres of road, to improve sightlines.	D8	Oct-Feb	SADC	GM Budget	-		
<b>Area E – Colney Heath Lane to Lyon Way</b>							
Colney Heath footpath 11 - resurface	E2	June-Aug	CMS/ SADC	S106	£4,500		
Lyon Way entrance: Improve entrance from informal access to surfaced entrance (footpath c. 10 metres long)	E3	Oct-Feb	CMS/ SADC	S106	£750		
Install 3 no. bins next to main access points from Alban Park	E4	May-July	SADC	GM Budget	-		
<b>Area F – Lyon Way to District Boundary</b>							
Smallford Station improvement project (see specification)	F2	All year	SSAWHS/ CMS	SSAWHS, S106	-		

# Alban Way Greenspace Action Plan Year 1 Action Plan Map

**Task Responsibility**

- District led
- CMS led
- District led
- CMS led

Officer/Contractor delivered  
Volunteer delivered

**Annual Management**

**General maintenance**

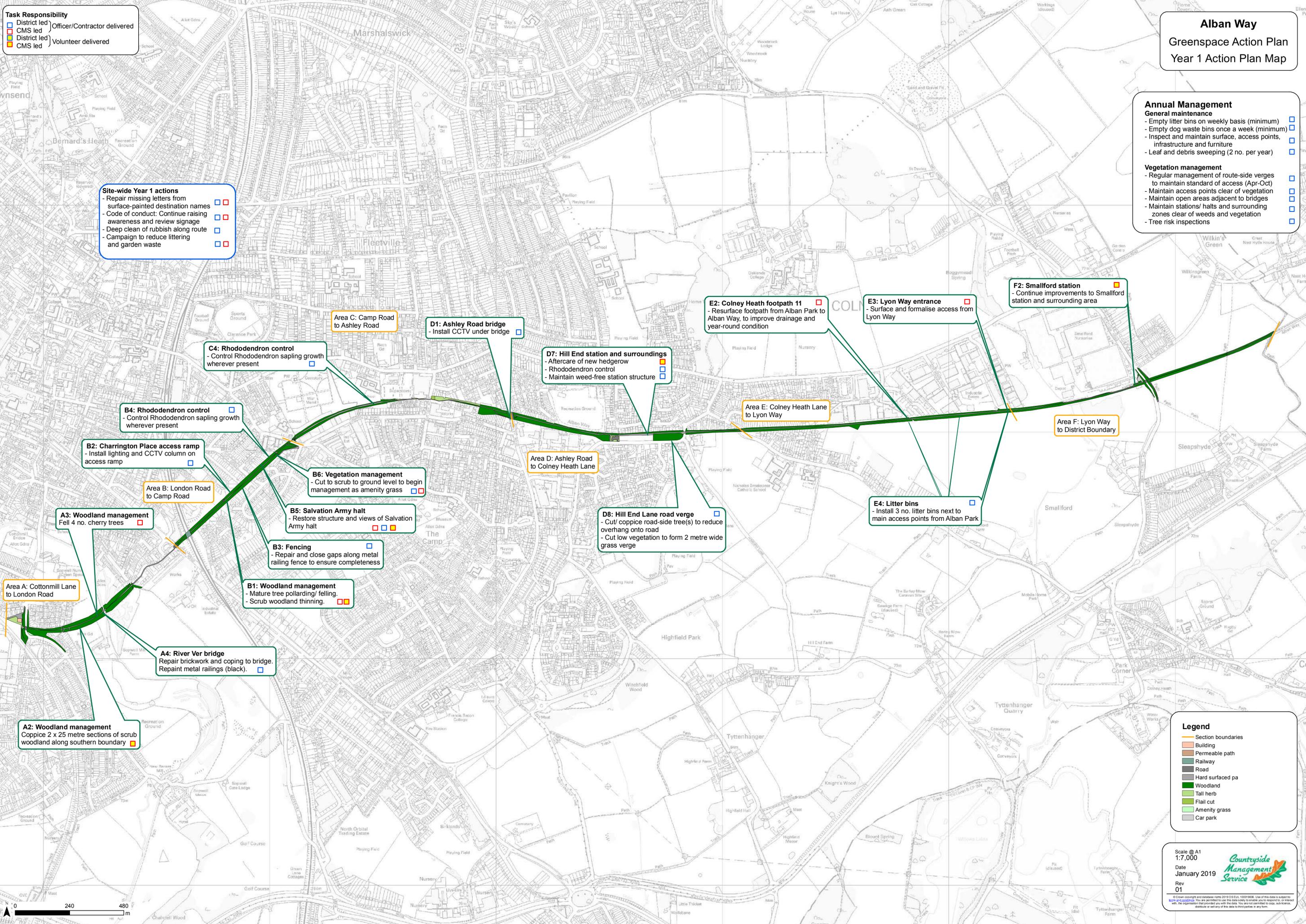
- Empty litter bins on weekly basis (minimum) ■
- Empty dog waste bins once a week (minimum) ■
- Inspect and maintain surface, access points, infrastructure and furniture ■
- Leaf and debris sweeping (2 no. per year) ■

**Vegetation management**

- Regular management of route-side verges to maintain standard of access (Apr-Oct) ■
- Maintain access points clear of vegetation ■
- Maintain open areas adjacent to bridges ■
- Maintain stations/ halts and surrounding zones clear of weeds and vegetation ■
- Tree risk inspections ■

**Site-wide Year 1 actions**

- Repair missing letters from surface-painted destination names ■ ■
- Code of conduct: Continue raising awareness and review signage ■ ■
- Deep clean of rubbish along route ■
- Campaign to reduce littering and garden waste ■ ■



**Area A: Cottonmill Lane to London Road**

**A2: Woodland management**  
- Coppice 2 x 25 metre sections of scrub woodland along southern boundary ■

**A3: Woodland management**  
- Fell 4 no. cherry trees ■

**A4: River Ver bridge**  
- Repair brickwork and coping to bridge.  
- Repaint metal railings (black). ■

**Area B: London Road to Camp Road**

**B2: Charrington Place access ramp**  
- Install lighting and CCTV column on access ramp ■

**B3: Fencing**  
- Repair and close gaps along metal railing fence to ensure completeness ■

**B4: Rhododendron control**  
- Control Rhododendron sapling growth wherever present ■

**B5: Salvation Army halt**  
- Restore structure and views of Salvation Army halt ■ ■

**B6: Vegetation management**  
- Cut to scrub to ground level to begin management as amenity grass ■ ■

**Area C: Camp Road to Ashley Road**

**C4: Rhododendron control**  
- Control Rhododendron sapling growth wherever present ■

**Area D: Ashley Road to Colney Heath Lane**

**D1: Ashley Road bridge**  
- Install CCTV under bridge ■

**D7: Hill End station and surroundings**  
- Aftercare of new hedgerow ■ ■ ■

- Rhododendron control ■

- Maintain weed-free station structure ■

**Area E: Colney Heath Lane to Lyon Way**

**E2: Colney Heath footpath 11**  
- Resurface footpath from Alban Park to Alban Way, to improve drainage and year-round condition ■

**E3: Lyon Way entrance**  
- Surface and formalise access from Lyon Way ■

**E4: Litter bins**  
- Install 3 no. litter bins next to main access points from Alban Park ■

**Area F: Lyon Way to District Boundary**

**F2: Smallford station**  
- Continue improvements to Smallford station and surrounding area ■

**Legend**

- Section boundaries
- Building
- Permeable path
- Railway
- Road
- Hard surfaced pa
- Woodland
- Tall herb
- Flail cut
- Amenity grass
- Car park

Scale @ A1  
1:7,000  
Date  
January 2019  
Rev  
01

**Countryside Management Service**

© Crown copyright and database rights 2019 OS Etc. 100019006. Use of this data is subject to our terms and conditions. You are permitted to use this data solely to enable you to respond to, or meet with, the organisations that provided you with the data. You are not permitted to copy, re-use, distribute or sell any of the data to third parties in any form.

## Year 2 actions

Action	Obj. Ref	When	Responsibility	Funding	Est. Cost	Spec. Ref.	Status
<b>Site-wide actions</b>							
Check for Rhododendron regrowth and control/ remove saplings immediately if found		Twice annually	SADC	GM Budget	-		
<i>Lighting proposal: Actions to be inserted if required following consideration by SADC Cabinet</i>		-	SADC/ CMS	Officer time			
<b>Area A – Cottonmill Lane to London Road</b>							
Aftercare of hedgerow to include fence maintenance, weeding, removal of obstructions to tree saplings	A1	Autumn-winter	SADC/ CMS	GM Budget	-		
<b>Area B – London Road to Camp Road</b>							
Rhododendron control	B4	Autumn	SADC	GM Budget	-		
Salvation Army Halt restoration: Interpretation, finishes and launch	B5	Apr-Sept	CMS/ SADC	S106 or business funder	£4,000		
Camp Road bridge renovation	B7	May-July	SADC	S106 or maintenance	£2,000		
<b>Area C – Camp Road to Ashley Road</b>							
Repairs to path edge at top of ramp (carry out in conjunction with bridge renovation)	C1	May-July	SADC	S106 or maintenance	£350		
Rhododendron control (if required)	C4	Autumn	SADC	GM Budget	-		
<b>Area D – Ashley Road to Colney Heath Lane</b>							
Woodland management – thinning of poor specimen and strongly trees, focusing on southern side of route	D2	Oct-Feb	CMS	S106?	£2,500		
Woodland management – thinning and crown lifting trees to improve views between Alban Way and Longacres Open	D3	Oct-Feb	CMS	S106?	£1,500		

Space. Use felled trees to close informal access points							
Formalise 4 no. access points between Longacres and Alban Way, with gravel footpaths. 2 no. at either end to be cycle accessible.	D4	Jan-Mar (following item D3)	CMS	S106?	£400		
Improve Longacres circular path to solve drainage issues and improve for cycle/ pedestrian use	D4a	Jan-Mar (following item D3)	CMS	S106?	£4,000		
Clear vegetation to form grassland with standard trees, to improve views to/ from Hill End Lane	D5	Oct-Feb	SADC/ CMS	GM Budget	-		
Woodland management: Light thin of poor specimen trees and removal of overhanging limbs. Under-plant with species of native shrubs and trees to become future standards.	D6	Oct-Feb	SADC/ CMS	S106 + tree planting allowance	£1,500		
<b>Area E – Colney Heath Lane to Lyon Way</b>							
<i>No items this year aside from annual actions.</i>							
<b>Area F – Lyon Way to District Boundary</b>							
Smallford Station improvement project (see specification)	F2	All year	SSAWHS/ CMS	SSAWHS, S106	-		
Woodland/ boundary management: Coppicing/thinning small trees and retaining some standards; coppicing scrub; removing old fencing & rubbish; planting of native species where required	F3	Oct-Feb	CMS/ SADC/ Vols	CMS vols work prog./ GM Budget	-		

# Alban Way Greenspace Action Plan Year 2 Action Plan Map

**Task Responsibility**

- District led } Officer/Contractor delivered
- CMS led } Officer/Contractor delivered
- District led } Volunteer delivered
- CMS led } Volunteer delivered

**Annual Management**

**General maintenance**

- Empty litter bins on weekly basis (minimum) □
- Empty dog waste bins once a week (minimum) □
- Inspect and maintain surface, access points, infrastructure and furniture □
- Leaf and debris sweeping (2 no. per year) □

**Vegetation management**

- Regular management of route-side verges to maintain standard of access (Apr-Oct) □
- Maintain access points clear of vegetation □
- Maintain open areas adjacent to bridges □
- Maintain stations/ halts and surrounding zones clear of weeds and vegetation □
- Tree risk inspections □

**Site-wide Year 3 actions**

- Rhododendron regrowth check and control (if required) □

**C4: Rhododendron control**

- Control Rhododendron sapling growth wherever present □

**B4: Rhododendron control**

- Control Rhododendron sapling growth wherever present □

**C1: Camp Road eastern access ramp**

- Improve path edge and access at top of ramp (in conjunction with Item B7) □ □

**B7: Camp Road bridge**

- Undertake repairs and improvements including replacement of panels, painting structure, and sport repairs to surface □ □

**B5: Salvation Army halt**

- Complete restoration of structure and interpretation
- Launch restored station □ □ □

**Area A: Cottonmill Lane to London Road**

**A1: Hedgerow aftercare**

- To include fence maintenance, weed removal, gapping up if required □

**D3: Woodland management**

- Thinning and crown lifting trees between Alban Way and Longacres Open Space
- Lay felled timber to close informal gaps □

**D4a: Longacres footpath**

- Improve Longacres circular footpath to solve drainage issues and accessibility □ □

**D4: Access points**

- Formalise 4 no. access points between Alban Way and Longacres.
- 2 no. at each end of Longacres to be cycle accessible □

**Area D: Ashley Road to Colney Heath Lane**

**D5: Hill End Lane access**

- Clear scrub to form grassland under mature trees, improving views to/ from Alban Way and Hill End Lane □

**D2: Woodland management**

- Light thinning (max. 20%) of crowding trees and scrub woodland, focussed on southern side of route □ □

**D6: Woodland management**

- Light thin of boundary trees and limb removal to reduce overcrowding and overhanging.
- Underplant with mixed native species to provide shrub layer and future standards □ □

**F2: Smallford station**

- Continue improvements to Smallford station and surrounding area □

**Area F: Lyon Way to District Boundary**

**F3: Vegetation management**

- Cutting/ coppicing of scrub woodland vegetation to ground level
- 2 x 25 metre sections, different areas to previous □

**Legend**

- Section boundaries
- Building
- Permeable path
- Railway
- Road
- Hard surfaced pa
- Woodland
- Tall herb
- Flail cut
- Amenity grass
- Car park

Scale @ A1  
1:7,000  
Date  
January 2019  
Rev  
01

**Countryside Management Service**

© Crown copyright and database rights 2019 OS Etc. 100019006. Use of this data is subject to our terms and conditions. You are permitted to use this data solely to enable you to respond to, or interact with, the organisation that provided you with the data. You are not permitted to copy, re-publish, distribute or sell any of this data to third parties in any form.



### Year 3 actions

Action	Obj. Ref	When	Responsibility	Funding	Est. Cost	Spec. Ref.	Status
<b>Site-wide actions</b>							
Check for Rhododendron regrowth and control/ remove saplings immediately if found		Twice annually	SADC	GM Budget	-		
<b>Area A – Cottonmill Lane to London Road</b>							
<i>No items this year aside from annual actions.</i>							
<b>Area B – London Road to Camp Road</b>							
<i>No items this year aside from annual actions.</i>							
<b>Area C – Camp Road to Ashley Road</b>							
Woodland management: Thinning to increase light and space	C2	Oct-Feb	CMS	S106?	£1,500		
Woodland enhancement: Vary structure through coppicing and pollarding; increase diversity of tree species through under-planting	C3	Oct-Feb	CMS/ Vols	S106? + tree planting allowance	£400		
Grassland enhancement: Allow growth of grass on bank and verges; add wildflower seed if regeneration poor	C5	Mar-Aug	SADC/ CMS	GM Budget	£150		
Hedgerow aftercare: Lay hedgerow if ready; gap up with native shrubs if required	C6	Oct-Feb	CMS/ Vols	CMS work prog.	-		
Plant species of hedgerow shrubs and occasional standard trees along southern boundary, to increase woodland connectivity along this section	C7	Oct-Feb	CMS/ Vols	CMS work prog. + tree planting allowance	-		
Woodland management: Light thinning (<20%) of woodland block to improve regeneration	C8	Oct-Feb	CMS/ Vols	CMS work prog. + contractor works	£1,000		

<b>Area D – Ashley Road to Colney Heath Lane</b>							
Woodland management: Light thinning of boundary trees; removal of self-set sycamores	D9	Oct-Feb	SADC/ CMS	GM Budget + private land	-		
<b>Area E – Colney Heath Lane to Lyon Way</b>							
Woodland management: Thinning of stands of trees with low diversity and some poor form trees, including ash, beech and sycamore.	E2	Oct-Feb	CMS	S106?	£1,500		
<b>Area F – Lyon Way to District Boundary</b>							
Woodland/ boundary management: Coppicing/thinning small trees and retaining some standards; coppicing scrub; removing old fencing & rubbish; planting of native species where required. Implement in 3 x 25 metre sections in a scalloping approach.	F1	Oct-Feb	CMS	CMS vols work prog.	-		

**Task Responsibility**

- District led } Officer/Contractor delivered
- CMS led } Officer/Contractor delivered
- District led } Volunteer delivered
- CMS led } Volunteer delivered

**Alban Way  
Greenspace Action Plan  
Year 3 Action Plan Map**

**Annual Management**

**General maintenance**

- Empty litter bins on weekly basis (minimum) ■
- Empty dog waste bins once a week (minimum) ■
- Inspect and maintain surface, access points, infrastructure and furniture ■
- Leaf and debris sweeping (2 no. per year) ■

**Vegetation management**

- Regular management of route-side verges to maintain standard of access (Apr-Oct) ■
- Maintain access points clear of vegetation ■
- Maintain open areas adjacent to bridges ■
- Maintain stations/ halts and surrounding zones clear of weeds and vegetation ■
- Tree risk inspections ■

**Site-wide Year 3 actions**

- Rhododendron regrowth check and control (if required) ■

**C5: Grassland enhancement** ■ ■

- Allow areas of long grass and wildflowers to establish on bank and verges
- Sow native wildflower seed if natural regeneration is slow

**C6: Hedgerow management** ■

- Lay hedgerow if growth at sufficient stage
- Gap up with new saplings if required

**C3: Woodland enhancement** ■

- Create greater variety in woodland structure
- Increase tree species diversity through underplanting with mixed native species

**C7: Tree planting** ■

- Plant native tree saplings along southern boundary, c. every 20 metres
- Species to suit future standards: Oak, field maple, beech, lime
- Tree protection required

**Area C: Camp Road to Ashley Road**

**Area E: Colney Heath Lane to Lyon Way**

**Area F: Lyon Way to District Boundary**

**C2: Woodland management** ■

- Light thinning of woodland focussed on southern boundary

**Area D: Ashley Road to Colney Heath Lane**

**F3: Woodland management** ■

- Cutting/ coppicing of scrub woodland along southern boundary
- 3 x 25 metre sections of coppicing and scallops

**Area B: London Road to Camp Road**

**C8: Woodland management** ■ ■

- Light thinning (max. 20%) of crowding trees and scrub woodland, in block to south of route

**D9: Woodland management** ■ ■

- Light thinning (max. 20%) of crowding trees and scrub woodland
- Removal of self-set sycamores on corner of entrance

**E2: Woodland management** ■ ■

- Light thinning (max. 20%) of ash, sycamore and beech trees to remove poor specimens and promote new growth

**Area A: Cottonmill Lane to London Road**

**Legend**

- Section boundaries
- Building
- Permeable path
- Railway
- Road
- Hard surfaced pa
- Woodland
- Tall herb
- Flail cut
- Amenity grass
- Car park

Scale @ A1  
1:7,000  
Date  
January 2019  
Rev  
01

**Countryside Management Service**

© Crown copyright and database rights 2019 OS Etc. 100019006. Use of this data is subject to the terms and conditions of the Ordnance Survey Licence. You are permitted to use this data solely to enable you to respond to, or interact with, the organisation that provided you with the data. You are not permitted to copy, re-publish, distribute or sell any of this data to third parties in any form.



## Year 4 actions

Action	Obj. Ref	When	Responsibility	Funding	Est. Cost	Spec. Ref.	Status
<b>Site-wide actions</b>							
Survey for invasive non-native species and remove if required		Annual	SADC/ CMS	Officer time	-		
Identify and carry out tree-planting to increase diversity and coverage of shrubs which will become future standards		Winter	CMS	Tree planting budget	£500		
Access, gate and barrier audit: Detailed check of all to identify any defects or repairs required		Annual	SADC/ CMS	Officer time	-		
<b>Area A – Cottonmill Lane to London Road</b>							
Woodland management: Create small scallops in route-side vegetation	A5	Oct-Feb	CMS/ Vols	CMS vols work prog.	-		
<b>Area B – London Road to Camp Road</b>							
Vegetation management: Small scale coppicing and thinning on embankments to improve light conditions	B8	Oct-Feb	CMS/ Vols	CMS vols work prog.	-		
<b>Area C – Camp Road to Ashley Road</b>							
<i>No items this year aside from annual actions.</i>							
<b>Area D – Ashley Road to Colney Heath Lane</b>							
Boundary trees: Survey regeneration of boundary trees and access points between Alban Way and Longacres, following works carried out in year 2. Follow-up management if required.	D10	Oct-Feb	CMS/ SADC	GM Budget + work prog.	-		
<b>Area E – Colney Heath Lane to Lyon Way &amp; Area F – Lyon Way to District Boundary</b>							
<i>No items this year aside from annual actions.</i>							

# Alban Way Greenspace Action Plan Year 4 Action Plan Map

**Task Responsibility**

- District led } Officer/Contractor delivered
- CMS led } Officer/Contractor delivered
- District led } Volunteer delivered
- CMS led } Volunteer delivered

**Annual Management**

**General maintenance**

- Empty litter bins on weekly basis (minimum) □
- Empty dog waste bins once a week (minimum) □
- Inspect and maintain surface, access points, infrastructure and furniture □
- Leaf and debris sweeping (2 no. per year) □

**Vegetation management**

- Regular management of route-side verges to maintain standard of access (Apr-Oct) □
- Maintain access points clear of vegetation □
- Maintain open areas adjacent to bridges □
- Maintain stations/ halts and surrounding zones clear of weeds and vegetation □
- Tree risk inspections □

**Site-wide Year 4 actions**

- Survey for Invasive non-native species □
- Identify opportunities for tree-planting a diverse species mix to become future standards □
- Access, gates and barrier audit and repairs □

**D10: Boundary trees** □

- Assess regeneration and condition of boundary trees between Alban Way and Longacres Open Space, following works carried out in Year 2
- Follow up management if required

**B8: Vegetation management** □

- Small scale coppicing and thinning of shrub vegetation on embankments

Area A: Cottonmill Lane to London Road

Area B: London Road to Camp Road

**A5: Woodland management** □

- Create small scallops in route-side vegetation

Area C: Camp Road to Ashley Road

Area D: Ashley Road to Colney Heath Lane

Area E: Colney Heath Lane to Lyon Way

Area F: Lyon Way to District Boundary

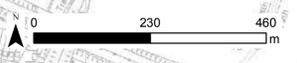
**Legend**

- Section boundaries
- Building
- Permeable path
- Railway
- Road
- Hard surfaced pa
- Woodland
- Tall herb
- Flail cut
- Amenity grass
- Car park

Scale @ A1  
1:7,000  
Date  
January 2019  
Rev  
01

**Countryside Management Service**

© Crown copyright and database rights 2019 OS Etc. 100019006. Use of this data is subject to the OS Licence. You are permitted to use this data solely to enable you to respond to, or meet with, the organisation that provided you with the data. You are not permitted to copy, re-publish, distribute or sell any of this data to third parties in any form.



## Year 5 actions

Action	Obj. Ref	When	Responsibility	Funding	Est. Cost	Spec. Ref.	Status
<b>Site-wide actions</b>							
Assess actions to date and produce new management plan		Annual	CMS/ SADC	Officer time	-		
<b>Area A – Cottonmill Lane to London Road</b>							
Aftercare of hedgerow to include fence maintenance, weeding, removal of obstructions to tree saplings, removal of tree guards if necessary	A1	Oct-Feb	CMS	GM Budget	-		
Check vegetation growth around Cottonmill Lane bridge and clear if necessary	A6	Oct-Feb	CMS/ SADC	GM Budget	-		
<b>Area B – London Road to Camp Road</b>							
Check vegetation growth around London Road and clear if necessary	B9	Oct-Feb	CMS/ SADC	GM Budget	-		
Check vegetation growth around Railway bridge and clear if necessary	B10	Oct-Feb	CMS/ SADC	GM Budget	-		
<b>Area C – Camp Road to Ashley Road</b>							
Check vegetation growth around Camp Road bridge and clear if necessary	C9	Oct-Feb	CMS/ SADC	GM Budget	-		
<b>Area D – Ashley Road to Colney Heath Lane</b>							
Check vegetation growth around Ashley Road bridge and clear if necessary	D11	Oct-Feb	CMS/ SADC	GM Budget	-		
<b>Area E – Colney Heath Lane to Lyon Way</b>							
Check vegetation growth around Colney Heath Lane bridge and clear if necessary	E3	Oct-Feb	CMS/ SADC	GM Budget	-		
<b>Area F – Lyon Way to District Boundary</b>							

Boundary management - Cutting/ coppicing of scrub woodland vegetation to ground level - 2 x 25 metre sections, different areas to previous	F3	Oct-Feb	CMS/ Vols	CMS vols work prog.	-		
Check vegetation growth around Station Road bridge and clear if necessary	F4	Oct-Feb	CMS/ SADC	GM Budget	-		

**Task Responsibility**

- District led } Officer/Contractor delivered
- CMS led } Officer/Contractor delivered
- District led } Volunteer delivered
- CMS led } Volunteer delivered

**Alban Way  
Greenspace Action Plan  
Year 5 Action Plan Map**

**Annual Management**

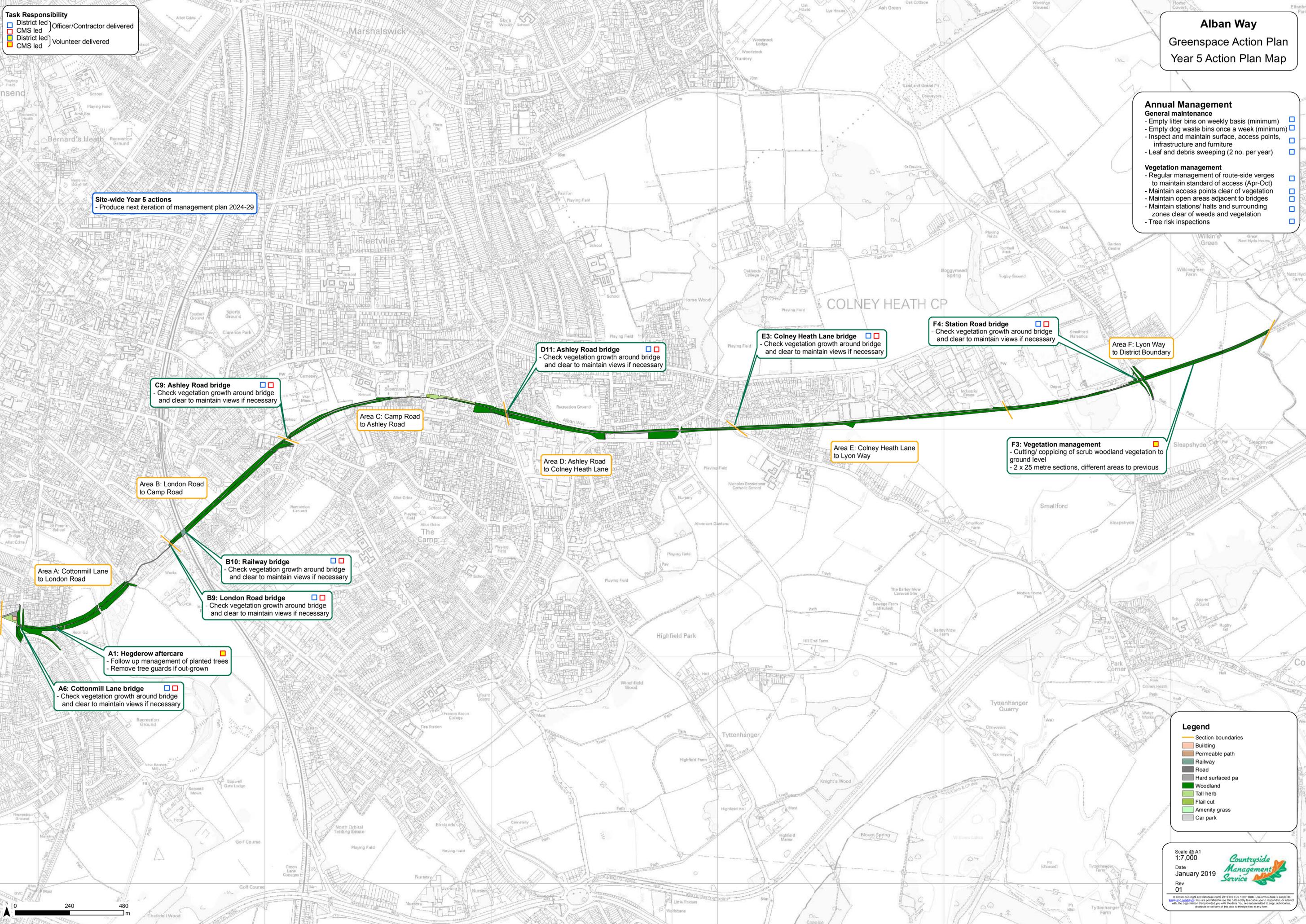
**General maintenance**

- Empty litter bins on weekly basis (minimum) ■
- Empty dog waste bins once a week (minimum) ■
- Inspect and maintain surface, access points, infrastructure and furniture ■
- Leaf and debris sweeping (2 no. per year) ■

**Vegetation management**

- Regular management of route-side verges to maintain standard of access (Apr-Oct) ■
- Maintain access points clear of vegetation ■
- Maintain open areas adjacent to bridges ■
- Maintain stations/ halts and surrounding zones clear of weeds and vegetation ■
- Tree risk inspections ■

**Site-wide Year 5 actions**  
- Produce next iteration of management plan 2024-29



**C9: Ashley Road bridge** ■ ■  
- Check vegetation growth around bridge and clear to maintain views if necessary

**Area C: Camp Road to Ashley Road**

**D11: Ashley Road bridge** ■ ■  
- Check vegetation growth around bridge and clear to maintain views if necessary

**Area D: Ashley Road to Colney Heath Lane**

**E3: Colney Heath Lane bridge** ■ ■  
- Check vegetation growth around bridge and clear to maintain views if necessary

**Area E: Colney Heath Lane to Lyon Way**

**F4: Station Road bridge** ■ ■  
- Check vegetation growth around bridge and clear to maintain views if necessary

**Area F: Lyon Way to District Boundary**

**F3: Vegetation management** ■  
- Cutting/ coppicing of scrub woodland vegetation to ground level  
- 2 x 25 metre sections, different areas to previous

**Area B: London Road to Camp Road**

**B10: Railway bridge** ■ ■  
- Check vegetation growth around bridge and clear to maintain views if necessary

**B9: London Road bridge** ■ ■  
- Check vegetation growth around bridge and clear to maintain views if necessary

**Area A: Cottonmill Lane to London Road**

**A1: Hegderow aftercare** ■  
- Follow up management of planted trees  
- Remove tree guards if out-grown

**A6: Cottonmill Lane bridge** ■ ■  
- Check vegetation growth around bridge and clear to maintain views if necessary

**Legend**

- Section boundaries
- Building
- Permeable path
- Railway
- Road
- Hard surfaced pa
- Woodland
- Tall herb
- Flail cut
- Amenity grass
- Car park

Scale @ A1  
1:7,000  
Date  
January 2019  
Rev  
01

**Countryside Management Service**

© Crown copyright and database rights 2019 OS ECU 100019006. Use of this data is subject to the OS Licence. You are permitted to use this data solely to enable you to respond to, or meet with, the organisation that provided you with the data. You are not permitted to copy, re-publish, distribute or sell any of this data to third parties in any form.



## 6.0 SPECIFICATIONS

---

### 6.1 Vegetation & Woodland Management

#### 6.1.1 Grassland

A universal, minimum standard of maintenance along the whole length of the Alban Way will be established. This will include creating a minimum 4m clearance (height) along the route, cutting 1m margins along each side of the path (to an overall width of 4m), keeping useable width of the path and entrance/egress points free from encroaching vegetation, and cutting around benches and signage.

The grassland area by Sutton Road is to be flail cut four times per year, three cuts between March and August and one in October/November.

Tall herb areas are to be cut once a year in February/March.

The small area of amenity grassland at Cottonmill Lane is to have 16 cuts between February and October (one cut each at the beginning and end of the season then two every other month), keeping the grass between a minimum of 20cm to maximum 35cm.

#### 6.1.2 Woodland

##### *Tree safety*

The safety of users is of primary importance to SADC. Formal tree safety surveys are undertaken every three years; any works identified by the surveys will be addressed as a matter of urgency. The tree inspection captures locations of all trees, inspects their condition and provides professionally supported recommendations for required tree work. The recommendations relate only to risk and not to issues of nuisance or aesthetics. Each inspection will take into account the risk factors relating to condition and targets (proximity to public footpaths etc) and project the date for the next inspection accordingly. That way we are able to prioritise inspections to those trees which potentially present the highest risk.

##### *Thinning*

The woodlands require thinning to stop the trees from becoming tall and spindly as they compete for light and to protect the older trees from becoming over shaded, losing the diverse woodland canopy. Selectively thin - by up to 20% across the whole site - the less healthy or desirable tree species and remove to give the remaining trees more space to develop. This will also allow light to reach the woodland floor, encouraging ground flora and an understorey of small plants, shrubs and trees to thrive. Thinning will break up any uniformed pattern that may be emerging and will create a more diverse structure.

##### *Coppicing*

Coppicing is a traditional method of woodland management where understorey trees are cut low to the ground and allowed to re-grow in a multi-stemmed form. Periodic cutting boosts the trees growth and coppiced trees in their various stages of growth provide a great variety of habitats for animals, birds and butterflies. Hazel will be coppiced on a 7 year rotation by cutting stems above previous cuts (other species of tree are cut to the previous level of the

stool without greatly increasing or decreasing the height) this promotes new vigorous growth and prolongs the trees life. Stems are cut using a sloping cut towards the outside of the stool – to shed rainwater. They are removed one at a time, working in a spiral fashion, from the outside in, towards the centre of the stool. Deer protection may be required to protect the regrowth from grazing in the form of temporary fencing or deer baskets made from the cut material.

#### *Timings*

Tree works to be undertaken between November and February to avoid bird nesting season, unless tree risk management inspections stipulate otherwise.

#### *Non-native species*

Selective removal of non-native species throughout the woodland areas. Invasive species including cherry laurel and rhododendron (plus any others that arise on site) will be targeted as an imperative. Further non-native species, such as sycamore and conifer trees, will be gradually selected for removal in favour of promoting native tree species growth.

#### *Timber arisings*

All cut logs and brash to be removed from site, unless there are any exceptionally large trees being removed due to health and safety reasons that could be turned into bench seats.

#### *Disposal of rubbish*

All non-organic material collected on site to be disposed of by Council contractor unless otherwise stated.

### **6.2 Signage**

Any new site-based, Rights of Way and Sustrans signage will follow the established specification for these styles of sign. The Alban Way logo has been developed under the 2014-19 GAP and is integrated into all signage and information; this has helped to rejuvenate the route and created a recognisable brand. Any future signage, such as a renewed code of conduct, will apply this brand in a clear and concise design.

### **6.3 Interpretation**

Interpretation boards developed during the 2014-19 GAP will be maintained in clean and good condition. Any additional interpretation will follow the same design and standard of materials. The retained rail infrastructure – halts and platforms - will be maintained and/ or restored to provide visitors with greater visual experiences along the route.

### **6.4 Car Park**

Improvements to Smallford Station car park's surface, drainage and the addition of extra parking bays have greatly improved its functionality and appeal. Vegetation management and hedgerow planting around the car park will improve visibility from the road to the Alban Way. New post and rail fencing between the car park and platform is more in keeping with the old railway and provides a view of the platform from the car park.