



HATFIELD ROAD CEMETERY

GREENSPACE ACTION PLAN

2024– 2029



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 which the site managers and stakeholders have identified for that site.

Public Engagement

Engagement with stakeholders is at the centre of effective management planning on any site. An initial engagement period was held for Hatfield Road Cemetery in December 2022, to establish core aims and objectives for the site; these are reflected in Section 3. A second stage of engagement completed in November 2023 enabled stakeholders to comment on the proposed management actions for the site. An associated engagement response document, published online as an appendix to this plan, summarises comments received and any amendments made to the plan as a result.

Version Control

Version	Issue Date	Details	Author	Reviewed	Approved

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1.0 SUMMARY

1.1 Site Summary

Site Name: Hatfield Road Cemetery

Site Address: Hatfield Road
St Albans
Hertfordshire
AL1 4LU

Grid Reference: TL 161072

Size: 6.3ha

Designations: There are no statutory or non statutory designations associated with this site.

Owner: St Albans City and District Council

1.2 Vision Statement

Hatfield Road Cemetery is a peaceful haven for wildlife and residents in its primarily urban surroundings. It retains its Victorian character while adapting to the changing needs of residents, offering a range of burial options and providing access to nature as well as a place for quiet reflection.

The vision for the management of Hatfield Road Cemetery will be to create:

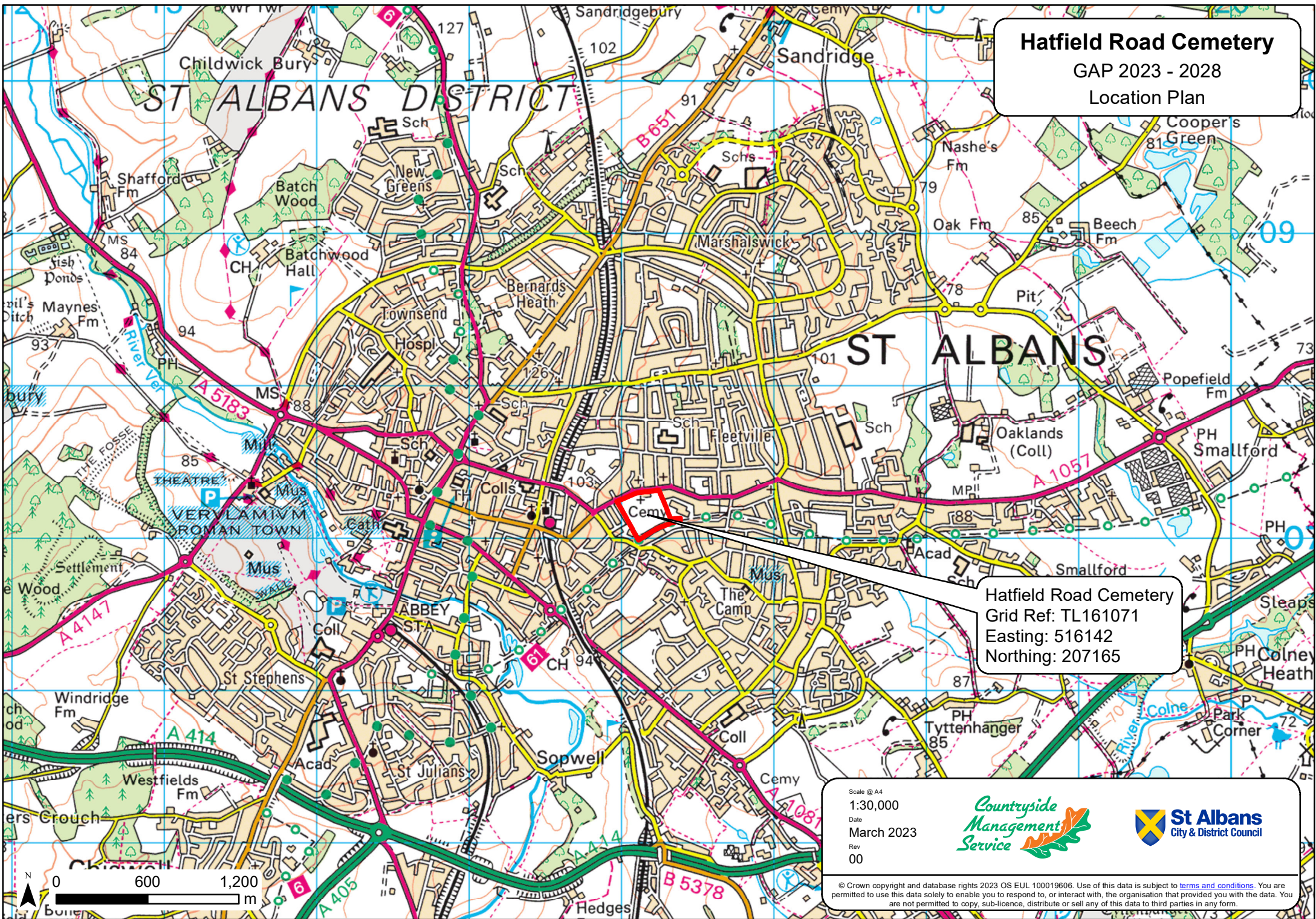
- A welcoming and accessible green space for the bereaved and the wider community
- A sustainable future for the site as a working cemetery, providing the best cemetery service possible for the public
- A site rich in biodiversity

2.0 SITE DESCRIPTION

2.1 Introduction

Hatfield Road Cemetery is situated on the A1057 St Albans to Hatfield Road, in the Clarence Ward of St Albans, approximately one mile from the City Centre, and half a mile from the city station. The Cemetery is adjacent to the Alban Way railway trail, which is route 61 on the national cycle route, but there is no direct link into the Cemetery. The only access gate, for vehicles and pedestrians, is directly off Hatfield Road. Hatfield Road is a typical example of a late Victorian Cemetery and is laid out in the manner of those times. The majority of graves are facing east/west and are outlined with kerb sets which were traditional for a late Victorian Cemetery.

The cemetery facilities include a cemetery lodge, chapel, office, public toilets and sheltered seating. There are also two sections of war graves, lawn graves, traditional graves, a Garden of Rest and a small section set aside for natural burials.



Hatfield Road Cemetery
GAP 2023 - 2028
Location Plan

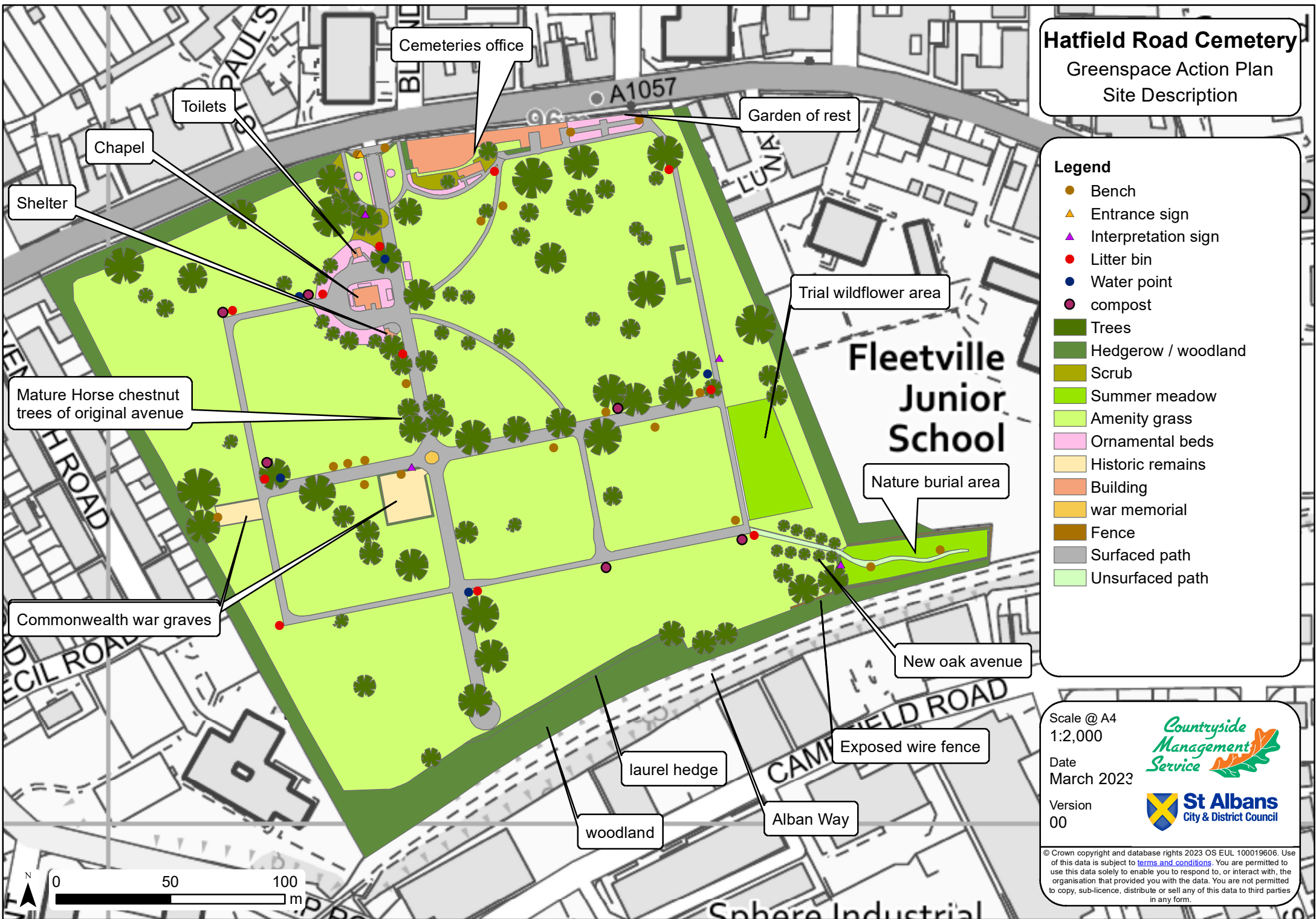
Hatfield Road Cemetery
Grid Ref: TL161071
Easting: 516142
Northing: 207165

Scale @ A4
1:30,000
Date
March 2023
Rev
00

Countryside Management Service

St Albans City & District Council

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Hatfield Road Cemetery

Greenspace Action Plan

Site Description

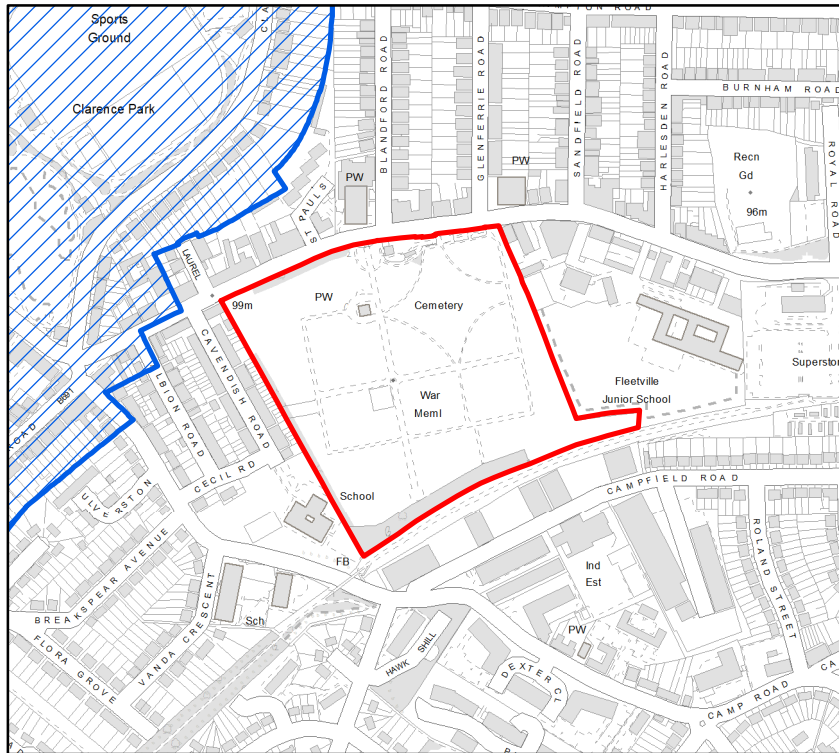
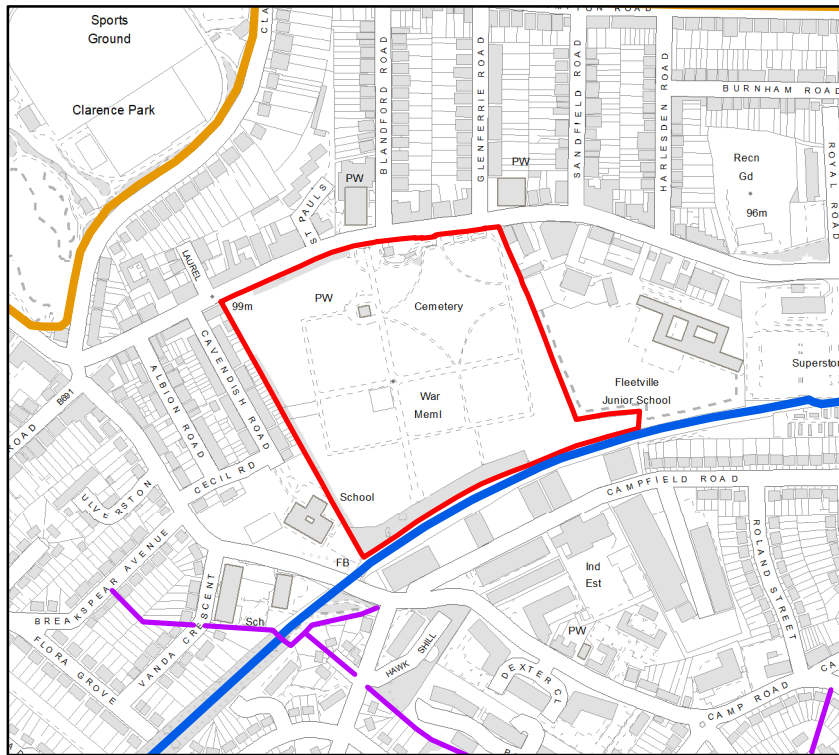
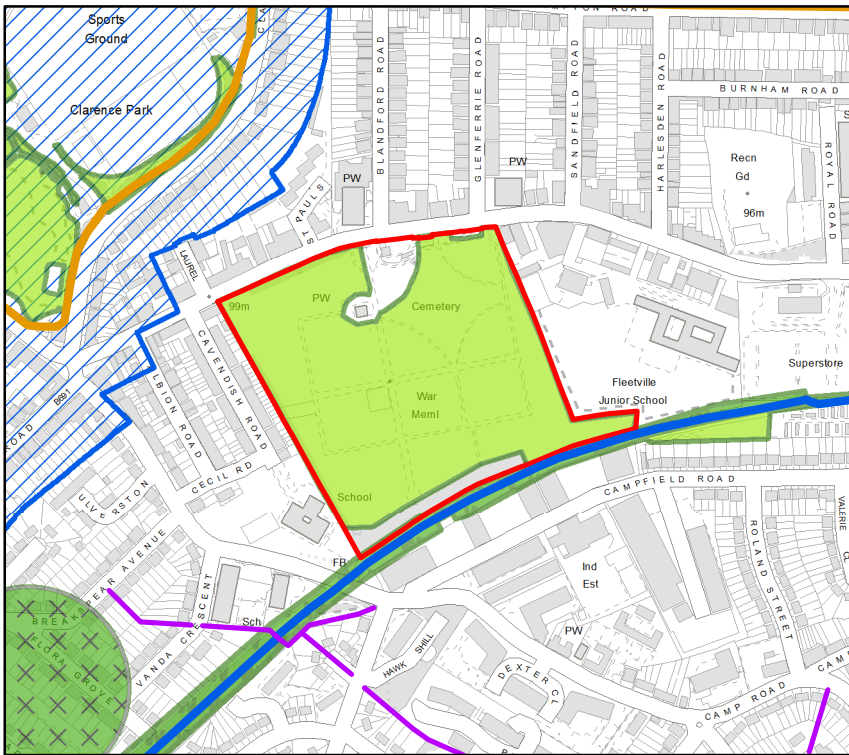
Legend

- Bench
- Entrance sign
- Interpretation sign
- Litter bin
- Water point
- compost
- Trees
- Hedgerow / woodland
- Scrub
- Summer meadow
- Amenity grass
- Ornamental beds
- Historic remains
- Building
- war memorial
- Fence
- Surfaced path
- Unsurfaced path

Scale @ A4
1:2,000
Date
March 2023
Version
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Hatfield Rd Cemetery

GAP 2023 - 2028

Constraints Plan

Legend

- Footpath
- Alban Way
- Hertfordshire Way
- Site boundary
- Wildlife Site
- Deselected Wildlife Site
- Ecosite
- Conservation Area



Scale @ A4
1:7,500
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March 2023
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2.2 Geography and Landscape

The site sits in an urban context with the Hatfield Road on the northern boundary and two junior schools on the eastern and southern boundary. The Alban Way is also on the southern boundary of the site. However the cemetery retains a peaceful atmosphere, with boundary hedges and mature trees providing a sense of enclosure for visitors.

The site is gently undulating with the land falling away to the south and west. Formal avenues of Horse Chestnut trees planted along the internal path network once directed visitors towards the central war memorial, however a number of these Horse Chestnuts have died and consequently the formality of the landscape has been weakened and replaced by a more open feel with scattered mature trees as can be seen in the aerial photos below. A new avenue of specimen trees have been planted leading into the natural burial area to formalise the entrance and make it more inviting for visitors.

There are seasonally planted beds at the entrance and surrounding the Chapel. The majority of the open grass areas are managed as amenity grass.

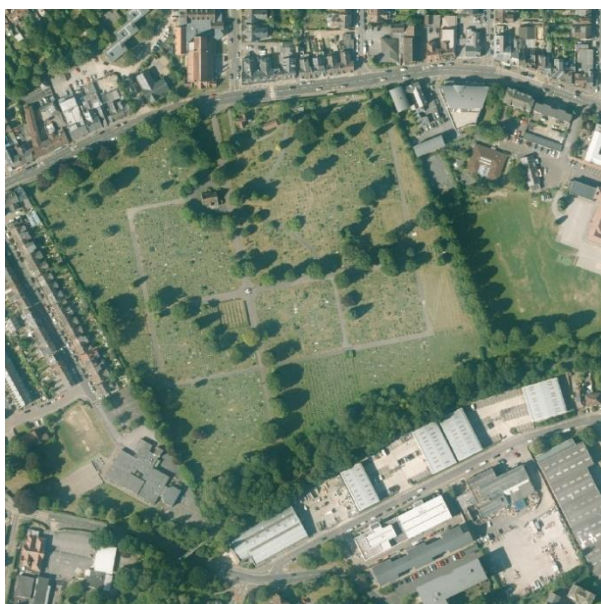
There are no statutory designations associated with this site.



Aerial photo 2000



Aerial photo 2010



Aerial photo 2015



Aerial photo 2020

2.3 History and Archaeology

The land for the cemetery was purchased in October 1883, from the landowner Earl Spencer, and the indenture document states that the land is to be used for a burial ground. In the late 1880s and during the 1890s the southern part of the cemetery was managed as a hay meadow which produced a usable crop and valuable income which was subsequently used to offset the cost of providing burial services.

The chapel situated on the right of the main avenue was built in 1884 for funeral services. It has a stained glass window designed by A.L. Moore of Southampton Row, London who designed many windows during this period. The chapel was refurbished following a condition survey conducted in 2010.

The lodge, also built in 1884, was refurbished in 2008 to bring it to a suitable standard for living accommodation. Neither the lodge nor the chapel have formal designation, however these buildings, as well as the cemetery as a whole, are of historical interest.

During both world wars, the cemetery was used for military burials. Over 200 war graves contain the remains of local and Commonwealth personnel, as well as a small number of prisoners of war, who died in nearby military hospitals during the

two world wars. These graves are maintained in a formal manner by the Commonwealth War Graves Commission. The Commission is responsible for the commemoration of almost 1,700,000 members of the Commonwealth forces who gave their lives in the two world wars.

An unsubstantiated rumour claims horses that died after contracting anthrax during the First World War are buried behind the hedges at the back of the cemetery. In the centre of the cemetery is a First World War memorial which was designated by the Bishop of St. Albans in 1920.

There are a number of well known figures buried within the cemetery including Samuel Ryder of Ryder Cup fame and Eleanor Ormerod, acclaimed economic entomologist and meteorologist who helped farmers in Australia, South Africa, New Zealand and Barbados.

2.4 Habitats and Wildlife

Hatfield Road Cemetery contains a mosaic of habitats shaped by the parkland design of the Victorian cemetery. The Alban Way running along the south east edge of the cemetery is an important corridor for wildlife which brings a wider range of species to the site.

2.4.1 Grassland

The majority of the site is managed as amenity grassland and subsequently these areas are of low ecological significance. However some interest does exist within the sward where there is a small area of neutral, semi improved grassland supporting a colony of Meadow Saxifrage found along the main driveway. The plant communities found across the remainder of the site contain those that can persist under perpetual mowing and include Ribwort Plantain, Creeping Cinquefoil, Germander Speedwell and Common Cat's Ear.

In 2022, an area at the east of the cemetery which does not have memorials on the graves was seeded with a wildflower mix and a relaxed mowing schedule was implemented in this area. This has received a more positive response from users than previous trials where grass was allowed to grow longer. Grasses remain

dominant in this area however many wildflower species do not grow in the first year after sowing.

A small area at the south east of the site has been set aside for natural burials. This area has been cleared, levelled and seeded with a wildflower seed mix and is managed through a bi annual cut and lift (May and September). The existing structure is more diverse than the wider cemetery containing a greater diversity of plants including Meadow Cranesbill, St Johnswort, Birdsfoot Trefoil and Knapweed. However competitive species including Nettle, Dock and Bindweed have become dominant across most of this area due to high nutrient levels in the soil.

There are also areas planted with daffodils and a number of formal flower beds found near the entrance along the north – south avenue. The beds are seeded with annuals providing a valuable source of nectar for pollinating insects from March through to October.

A number of unattended graves have been colonised with self seeded *Sedum* spp.

2.4.2 Woodland and trees

Historically lines of mature Horse Chestnut trees followed the north south and east west avenues but a number of these have died. The remaining Horse Chestnuts are all showing signs of infestation by leaf minor *Cameraria ohridella*, which results in discolouration of the leaves and increased susceptibility to infection, which in turn can result in mortality. There is a tree replacement strategy in place, which was initiated in 2015, using Sweet Chestnut to replace the majority of the trees and leaving a small number as standing deadwood, thereby providing valuable habitat features for wildlife while maintaining the historic appearance of the avenues. This strategy aligns with St Albans City and District Council's (SADC) Tree Action Plan & Policy 2015/16 and Sustainability and Climate Crisis Strategy 2020, which aim to increase the number and quality of trees within the district.

The site benefits from a number of mature trees which include Holly, Copper Beech, Silver Birch, Willow, Sycamore and Oak. There is also range of conifer species including Yew and Cedar of Lebanon. A number of trees are growing on graves either where they have self set or been planted as ornamental features on graves.

Established hedges form the boundaries of the site. The eastern boundary is largely Holly becoming scrub with mature Poplars towards the south east corner. The southern boundary is Privet and Laurel with the woodland edge of the Alban Way beyond. A laurel hedge also forms the boundary to the west of the site.

2.4.3 Birds

The mosaic of scattered trees with boundary hedges provides opportunities for feeding and nesting birds. The large areas of amenity grass in particular provide an important feeding habitat for Green Woodpeckers. Other species recorded included Blue Tit, Long tailed Tit, Song thrush, Great Spotted Woodpecker, Robin, Jay and Redwing.

Bird and bat boxes have been installed on a number of trees to further enhance the habitat available.

2.4.4 Invertebrates

Although the majority of the site at present is managed as amenity grassland reducing the opportunities for insects, some nectar sources do exist. During spring and early summer the formal flower beds and wildflower meadow areas support feeding insects. A large percentage of the boundary hedges and mature standard trees have some degree of ivy which provides a valuable source of nectar during autumn. Limited invertebrate records exist for the site, however Holly Blue, Small White and Speckled Wood butterflies have been recorded.

2.5 Access, Facilities and Infrastructure

2.5.1 Access and Circulation

Less than a mile from the city station and with a number of bus routes running along the Hatfield Road, the cemetery is well served by public transport. Visitors enter the cemetery off the Hatfield Road through two pedestrian gates or via the main vehicle gate. The entrance leads to the main north south orientated avenue which is bisected by an east west avenue. These avenues are linked to a network of other surfaced roads which allow access to the graves for car-borne visitors. There is no formal car park however parking is available along the main avenues.

Much thought and discussion has been given in the past years to the subject of opening a direct link between the Alban Way/Green Ring and the Hatfield Road Cemetery. Currently, the Cemetery affords a well landscaped site suited for peaceful reflection by bereaved families who have lost relatives or friends. Opening the site up as a thoroughfare will provide a shortcut for many; however, there is a significant risk that many using such a thoroughfare will not have the necessary respect for the site and its sensitive use. SADC do not want the serenity of the cemetery to be compromised by problems with dog walkers, teenagers, cyclists, litter, thefts, vandals and maintenance costs. There is a walk through from the Alban Way to Hatfield Road which passes through Morrison's car park, which is only a short distance away from the cemetery.

2.5.2 Site Furniture

An information panel is situated outside the entrance providing details about the cemetery including opening times, where enquiries should be directed and acceptable behaviour within the site.

Inside the entrance, facing the gates, is an interpretation panel with a map of the site which gives a brief overview of the history and wildlife of the cemetery and information on how specific graves can be located.

An information board by the Commonwealth War Graves Commission provides information about the Commission and its involvement at Hatfield Road Cemetery. This is becoming worn and difficult to read.

Memorial benches have been installed, which can be leased by members of the public, however they remain the property of SADC who maintain them on a two year cycle.

The cemetery is served by a recycling bin at the entrance with a number of bins provided for green waste and general litter located within the site. Five water taps are also located around the site.

The cemetery is signed from the main Hatfield Road with internal directional signage located throughout the site.

2.5.3 Buildings and Structures

Visitor facilities include a Chapel that can accommodate up to 40 people which is available for those wishing to hold a service of memorial in addition to a burial and service. A public shelter is located close to the Chapel, providing a useful space for visitors waiting to attend a service in the Chapel or to seek refuge from the weather. There is also a small toilet block with a separate disabled facility.

The cemetery manager works from a small on site office which is open from 09:00am – 16:00pm. On occasion, such as during burials or when staff are showing families around the site, the office is closed. The cemetery office phone number is displayed on the office door so that visitors can leave a voicemail message for staff during these times. The office, built in 2004, was designed to have minimal visual impact on the surroundings with wood cladding on the sides of the building and flower beds in front.

The Lodge next to the cemetery entrance is a private residence.

2.6 Community and Events

SADC recognise that cemeteries have an important role to play in contributing to the provision of open green spaces within the district and are committed to encouraging the local community to enjoy the cemetery for its historic interest and wildlife.

SADC undertook public engagement during 2023 to inform the management of their cemeteries going forward. This follows recommendations for improvement from the ICCM review of St Albans cemeteries in 2022. Residents were invited to take part in surveys covering their interest in the cemeteries as a green space, to consider volunteering in projects being undertaken and to look at potential design and build proposals.

This will be the basis for future improvements, using the feedback and continuing to work with residents to ensure we engage with the community in all aspects of the service.

2.6.1 Community

St Albans is a diverse and multi-cultural city. The demographics can be described as follows based on the 2021 census:

	St Albans		England
	Number	Percentage	Percentage
White	123,865	83.6	81
Mixed ethnicity	6,354	4.3	3.0
Asian/Asian British	12,176	8.2	9.6
Black/African/Caribbean/ Black British	3,159	2.1	4.2
Other ethnicity	2,615	1.8	2.2

	St Albans		England
	Number	Percentage	Percentage
0-15	32076	21.6	18.5
16-24	12193	8.2	10.6
25-49	49242	33.3	33.0
50-74	42159	28.5	29.2
75+	12503	8.5	8.5

Source: Office for National Statistics – Census 2021

The cemeteries Manager has meetings with representatives from local faith groups when required to inform the management of the cemetery to ensure that the cemetery meets the needs of followers of their respective faiths.

The cemetery benefits from a degree of volunteer activity including occasional work parties organised by external organisations. A small but steady number of volunteers have been involved with the Adopt a Grave scheme since it started in 2008.

Due to its religious importance as a cemetery, historical interest, value to wildlife, and being a local green space Hatfield Road Cemetery has a diverse range of stakeholder organisations:

- SADC

- CMS
- St Albans and Hertfordshire Architectural and Archaeological Society
- Herts and Middlesex Wildlife Trust
- Diocese of St Albans
- The Islamic Centre
- St Albans City Neighbours Committee
- Institute of Cemeteries and Crematorium Management

2.6.2 Site Management

Hatfield Road Cemetery is a working cemetery run by SADC as the burial authority. SADC has a statutory duty to manage its cemeteries and carry out burials following prescriptions in the Local Government Act 1972 the Local Authorities Cemeteries Order 1977 and the ICCM's Charter for the Bereaved.

SADC has adopted the Institute of Cemetery and Crematorium Management's (ICCM) Charter for the Bereaved to provide best practice in the bereavement service. The Cemeteries Manager marks each grave, issues grave preparation instructions and checks each grave prior to burial. They attend all burials, meets the cortege, accompanies the funeral director to the grave, and ensures the ceremony proceeds safely. A small box of dry soil is offered to the mourners for scattering on the coffin.

Further details on grave allocation and how the sustainability of grave availability will be ensured can be found in the [Cemeteries Information and Regulations document](#) published by SADC.

SADC are committed to managing their cemeteries using environmentally sustainable means. At Hatfield Road Cemetery they have implemented the following measures to date:

- Facilitating the separation of green waste by visitors with appropriate bins and composting green waste generated on site for use as fertiliser on flower beds, and
- adopting peat, herbicide and pesticide free grounds maintenance, except where there is net benefit to the environment such as control of invasive species.

2.6.3 Events

Guided walks through Hatfield Road Cemetery were run by Fleetville Diaries local history group prior to COVID-19 and the associated restrictions. Unfortunately, at a Special General Meeting held at Fleetville Community Centre on 6th November 2021, the sad decision was made to close down this local history group.

In the past a lecturer from the University of Hertfordshire has used the chapel to hold a study day on death for his psychology students. There is potential for similar events to be organised in the future.

3.0 AIM & OBJECTIVES

The aim and objectives of the GAP are as follows:

Aim

Hatfield Road Cemetery contains a range of habitats from amenity grassland, wildflower meadows, parkland trees and pockets of secondary woodland, in addition to being a valued space for quiet reflectance. This plan seeks to secure a sustainable future for the cemetery, to conserve the formal parkland landscape and introduce management regimes to conserve and enhance the mosaic of wildlife habitats. The primary aims for management of the cemetery are therefore to keep the cemetery a clean, well maintained, safe and secure open space and to enhance the biodiversity value of the site.

Objectives

A. To maintain Hatfield Road Cemetery as a welcoming place, enhancing the experience of using the site for the bereaved and other visitors:

- A1 Continue to follow best practice as outlined by the ICCM's Charter for the Bereaved.
- A2 Fill gaps in the boundary hedge using native hedge species to improve privacy.
- A3 Create a woodland path through the trees at the southern edge of the cemetery.
- A4 Improve the accessibility of interpretation materials.

B. To ensure that all visitors to Hatfield Road Cemetery feel safe and able to enjoy the site:

- B1 Undertake regular inspections and maintenance of trees, furniture and structures to ensure their condition is safe and suitable.
- B2 Complete memorial inspections every five years.
- B3 Carry out tree safety surveys every three years.

C. To ensure the standard of maintenance is upheld and relevant across the site:

- C1 Manage and maintain the paths and signage.
- C2 Remove self seeded scrub from unattended graves.
- C3 Undertake regular litter picking and small scale vegetation management.

C4 Ensure maintenance of the site is ecologically and financially sustainable.

D. To conserve and communicate the heritage of Hatfield Road Cemetery:

D1 Continue delivery of the tree replacement strategy for the avenues of horse chestnuts.

D2 Establish an understanding of the condition and historic significance of the cemetery and the features within it.

D3 Promote the cemetery as a place of historic interest.

E. To enhance and communicate the biodiversity value of the cemetery:

E1 Remove topsoil and overshadowing trees from the natural burial area and reseed with wildflower meadow seed mix.

E2 Replace non-native species in hedges with native species.

E3 Maintain and increase wildflower meadow areas.

E4 Promote the cemetery as a place for enjoying wildlife.

F. To attract a wider range of visitors and users to the site and promote opportunities for involvement:

F1 Develop links with schools and promote the cemetery as a site for learning about conservation, sustainability and bereavement.

F2 Produce regular SADC Community News articles

F3 Continue to promote opportunities for the community to engage with the site in a structured and supported way.

4.0 MANAGEMENT PRESCRIPTIONS

The management prescriptions described here form the basis of the actions proposed on the following action plan maps and tables (Section 5).

St Albans City and District Council are undertook public engagement independent of this GAP during 2023 to inform the management of their cemeteries. This follows recommendations for improvement from the ICCM review of St Albans Cemeteries in 2022 and was concluded in September 2023. This will be the basis for future improvements, using the feedback and continuing to work with residents to ensure SADC engage with the community in all aspects of the service. Several actions proposed here will be further guided by the results of this engagement.

4.1 A welcoming place

The primary function of a cemetery is to provide a tranquil place for both religious and non-religious services. However burial grounds were originally envisaged as public open spaces, and were professionally designed to be attractive places to visit in their own right. A key objective of this plan is to make the cemetery a welcoming place for all to enjoy.

In line with the ICCM Charter for the Bereaved SADC endeavour to manage Hatfield Road Cemetery to create and maintain an atmosphere of solace and respect for bereaved individuals. To this end the cemetery needs to provide a degree of privacy to visitors however the boundary hedges contain gaps, especially along the north edge of the nature burial area. These will be filled using native hedgerow species, maximising the benefits to wildlife as well as people. Adjacent to the nature burial area, on the southern boundary of the site, is a section of wire fence which has an unwelcoming appearance. Due to mature trees shading the area, shade tolerant species such as holly should be planted to form a hedge, giving a friendlier and more cared for appearance to this corner of the cemetery.

The large laurel hedge at the south of the cemetery prevents access to a number of graves behind the hedge. This should be removed to allow access to the graves and reconnect the woodland beyond them to the rest of the site.

The surfaced paths allow access to the cemetery office and the garden of rest and no graves are more than 85m from the surfaced path. Ground guards are used to

provide access for mourners across the grass during funerals when necessary. A number of mown paths are also maintained to facilitate access to graves and the natural burial area. The existing paths are intended to provide access to graves rather than to encourage visitors to connect with nature. There is a need for access to high quality greenspaces among residents generally as time spent in nature is proven to have benefits for mental health including improving mood. A footpath focused on facilitating engagement with the natural environment may therefore be of particular benefit to those experiencing grief and add to the bereavement service offered by the council. Such a path could be created through the small area of woodland at the back of the cemetery to make the most of the habitats within the grounds and promote the site as a place to see wildlife as well as a cemetery.

There are two existing interpretation panels; the war graves panel is in relatively poor condition and the other panel is in good condition, but only provides an overview of the history and wildlife of the site, lacking more detailed information for those who are interested. Additional interpretation could be installed near the shelter exploring the history of the cemetery and the noteworthy figures buried there in more detail. Any new interpretation should incorporate alternative communication styles such as tactile features or having plain text versions online, as well as being suitably positioned, to ensure it is accessible to more members of the community.

4.2 Healthy, safe and secure

The cemetery has an open feel offering long views across the site which give a sense of security. The site is securely fenced and the cemetery gates and all buildings including the shelter are locked at night. The cemetery office connected to the CCTV control room at the Council Offices which allows staff to contact the emergency services if this is required. The occupiers of the entrance lodge also provide a degree of supervision during those times when the office and gates are closed.

The majority of graves within the cemetery incorporate personal memorials which, if damaged, must be fixed in accordance with the National Association of Memorial Masons (NAMM) with stone masons registered to either NAMM or the British Register of Accredited Memorial Masons (BRAMM). SADC has a rolling programme of memorial testing. This is completed by external contractors and the Cemeteries

Manager who has received the relevant training on a five year rotation. Inspection results are recorded centrally. Any memorials that are deemed unsafe are laid flat on the associated burial plot. Where records exist, relatives are contacted prior to this work being completed.

A formal tree safety survey is completed every three years by John O'Conner, SADC's grounds maintenance contractors. The inspection is an electronic based system and records key attributes of the tree and map data of its location, with remedial works entered as actions as they arise. Informal inspections are also made by the maintenance team on a day to day basis.

Oak processionary moth (OPM) has not been found within Hatfield Road Cemetery to date, however St Albans City and District is within the Established zone for this invasive species, making it the responsibility of landowners to manage OPM on their land. If a potential OPM sighting is identified on site, either through the course of regular inspections, maintenance activities or reported to SADC by a third party or member of the public, appropriate action will be undertaken based current best practice and the level of risk posed to public health.

4.3 Clean and well maintained

There are over 200 war graves within the cemetery, where local and Commonwealth military personnel from the First and Second World War are buried. These distinct areas are maintained in a formal manner by the Commonwealth War Graves Commission. Other graves are maintained by relatives and friends or through the adopt a grave scheme. A large number of graves remain unattended though and despite the grounds maintenance cutting back vegetation on graves, in some places shrubs and trees have grown in the graves as a result. Such vegetation growing in graves can pose a threat to the above ground features of those graves. To protect a number of memorials and the overall aesthetic of the cemetery, scrub (i.e. smaller trees and bushes) will be removed from graves. This must be carried out sensitively to avoid disturbing the graves or damaging the associated memorials.

Refuse collection and small scale vegetation management are carried out regularly by John O'Connor under the existing Grounds Maintenance contract. This contract describes the sustainability and environmental standards which must be adhered to.

An example of the standards required for all contracts arising from this GAP are outlined in section 6 of this document.

The green refuse bins have been used by visitors however a significant amount of plastic has been placed in these bins, in particular, wrapping around bouquets and plastic flowers. Additional signage may be required to explain that these plastic items are not suitable for the green refuse bins. To further increase the sustainability of the site water butts should be installed on the buildings to supply water for visitors and volunteers to water plants on the graves and other memorials.

Informal inspections of paths, signage and other furniture are carried out by the maintenance team on a day to day basis. Issues can then be addressed as they arise.

4.4 Historic character

Hatfield Road Cemetery is a typical example of a late Victorian Cemetery, the layout and original buildings have not been changed significantly from the initial design, with a stone walled chapel and avenues running north-south and east-west to form a cross. There is limited information on the historic environment of the cemetery available to visitors at present and as such it does not meet its potential as a place of historic interest.

The chapel, wall and gate, and lodge, which were built in 1884, retain their character as their external appearances are largely unchanged. The most recent condition survey of any of these structures was 2010 and the chapel has since been refurbished. As a structure of historic interest and an important part of the aesthetic appeal of the site, the chapel and other original structures should be preserved and information on them be made available to visitors.

An interpretation panel installed and maintained by the Commonwealth War Graves Commission provides insight into the people buried in the war graves. There are also a number of notable individuals buried within the cemetery including Eleanor Ormerod, acclaimed economic entomologist and meteorologist who helped farmers in Australia, South Africa, New Zealand and Barbados, and Samuel Ryder of Ryder Cup fame are buried in the cemetery.

A new condition survey of the 19th century structures should be conducted and an interpretation panel on the history of the cemetery and the noteworthy people buried within it could be installed to allow visitors to appreciate the heritage of the site. The tree replacement strategy will be continued to address the declining health of the mature horse chestnuts due to infestation by leaf minor *Cameraria ohridella* and fill in gaps in the avenues and maintain the historic avenues of the original design.

The cemetery also has potential to connect people with more personal history as burial records form an important source for many family history projects. The registers for the three cemeteries owned by SADC are housed in a brick built store room in the Cemetery Office. The registers are also on micro fiche stored in a safe in the District Council offices because they are irreplaceable. Records from 2001 onwards with the addition of a number of older records are held on the Burial and Cremation Administration System (BACAS) database. SADC intend to digitise all of the existing records in due course with a view to making them available to the public.

4.5 Habitats and Biodiversity

Hatfield Road Cemetery consists of a mosaic of parkland, grassland, and woodland and contains mature trees and edge habitats which are valuable to a wide range of species. The Sustainability and Climate Crisis Strategy published by SADC in 2020 expresses the council's aim to maximise the wildlife value of green areas across the District including cemeteries. To ensure the success of habitat management in the face of increasing extreme weather events, the actions in this plan will foster climate resilience by supporting the establishment of an ecosystem which is suitable for the anticipated future climate.

4.5.1 Grassland

The cemetery's history as a hay-meadow and cemetery, both of which received relatively low input in terms of landscaping, has allowed some biodiversity to persist in the grassland. In more recent years there have been efforts to increase the biodiversity of the grassland by creating areas of wildflower meadow.

The natural burial area at the southeast of the cemetery was seeded with a wildflower meadow mix. The existing structure is more diverse than the wider cemetery containing a greater diversity of plants including Meadow Cranesbill, St

Johnswort, Birdsfoot Trefoil and Knapweed. However competitive species including Nettle, Dock and Bindweed have become dominant across most of this area due to high nutrient levels in the soil. The majority of this input is contributed by leaves dropped by neighbouring trees, some of which also inhibit the growth of meadow species by shading the area. Manmade debris also been found in the top foot of the soil which may also have added to the nutrient levels. To address this the top foot of the soil will be removed and made into a raised bank or butterfly mound and two trees, neither of which are native species, will be removed and the area reseeded with native wildflower and grass species tolerant of partial shade. The dividing hedge provides a screen so these works will have limited visual impact on the remainder of the cemetery.

In the main area of the cemetery, management of the grassland must be balanced between the needs of wildlife and the desire of many site users to maintain a formal appearance within the cemetery. The initial response to the existing wildflower areas has been largely positive and the ongoing consultation with residents will determine how the wildflower areas will be managed going forward. To limit the visual impact of seeding in the main cemetery smaller areas could be seeded initially and the wildflowers could then be allowed to spread over a wider area through natural seed dispersal. Additionally wildflower only mixes which do not include grass species could be used as these require less bare ground. A complete mix containing wildflower and grass species would bring greater biodiversity improvements to the site though and should be used if residents are supportive of this.

All of the seed mixes used must be targeted to the mowing regime which will be implemented ensuring that the species present can flower and set seed between cuts where more frequent mowing is employed or that grasses do not shade out smaller flowering plants if cutting is less frequent. In areas cut once a year or less seed mixes should contain yellow rattle (*Rhinanthus minor*) and red bartsia (*Odontites vernus*), which are hemi-parasitic on grasses and will reduce the dominance of grasses and thereby promote the establishment of wildflowers.

4.5.2 Trees and Woodland

SADC are actively seeking to increase the number of trees in the district however trees should be located appropriately with respect to the use of the land. In a

cemetery this means that trees should not disrupt graves or the formal parkland appearance desired by many site users. Consequently scrub growing within graves should be removed and the tree replacement strategy should be continued, planting sweet chestnuts in place of the horse chestnuts as and when they are lost, but not increasing the number of trees within the site. Mature trees will be retained until they are at risk of falling and in a few cases the stems have been retained as standing deadwood because both mature trees and standing deadwood provide valuable habitats which younger trees do not. To ensure the survival of new plantings best practice will be followed for their planting and aftercare as it adapts to changing weather patterns including hotter drier summers and milder winters with higher likelihood of storms.

The hedge between the nature burial area and the rest of the cemetery contains non-native species. To improve its value to nature and create a more appropriate surround for the nature burial area the existing hedge will be replaced with native hedgerow species, such as holly (*Ilex Aquifolium*), yew (*Taxus baccata*), wild privet (*ligustrum vulgare*), blackthorn (*Prunus spinosa*), dog rose (*Rosa canina*), buckthorn (*Rhamnus cathartica*) and Hawthorn (*Crataegus monogyna*). A new hedge will also be planted at the north boundary of the nature burial area and gaps in the hedge along the southern boundary of cemetery will be filled as described in section 4.1. Where possible new planting on the southern boundary of the cemetery should leave narrow gaps between shrubs to encourage movement of wildlife between the cemetery and the Alban Way without reducing the privacy of the site.

To maximise the health of trees and shrubs and benefits to wildlife a buffer margin of at least 1 metre should be left uncut at the base of hedgerows and around the base of trees. This protects the base of the stem from damage during mowing, helps retain moisture for the hedge or tree during dry periods and provides a refuge for wildlife. This margin can be sown with shade tolerant wildflowers for improved visual appeal and should be carefully cut once a year in late autumn.

There is potential for further enhancements to be made through the provision of bird and bat boxes, which can be sponsored by families as 'Living memorials' to those interred within the cemetery. Similarly bee and bug hotels could be installed to encourage pollinators and other invertebrates.

4.6 Marketing and communication

The SADC website contains information about the District's cemeteries including a comprehensive list of printable PDF documents covering a range of topics including:

- Cemetery Fees and Charges
- Adopt a Grave Scheme
- Green Burials in St Albans
- Information for Grave Owners
- Remembrance Memorials

The website also provides useful information such as opening times, facilities, contact details and an interactive map.

The Cemeteries Manager will produce quarterly articles for SADC's residents newsletter which is emailed to subscribers every month with a hard copy magazine delivered to all households in the district twice a year.

Volunteering is a tried and tested way of increasing interest and care for a site, whilst providing participants with the benefits of healthy activity, socialisation and environmental projects. There is scope for increasing the volunteer involvement within the cemetery:

- The Adopt a Grave scheme will continue and be promoted more widely,
- An archival volunteer could be recruited to identify people of historic interest who have been interred within the cemetery,
- A number of the habitat improvements could be carried out by volunteers including the wildflower area creation, hedge planting, and woodland path creation.

Hatfield Road Cemetery attracts a small number of work parties every year including one regularly organised for Interfaith Day. CMS conservation volunteers will also deliver some tasks on site. More regular volunteer activities could be introduced through establishment of a Friends of greenspaces group for the cemetery, which could undertake routine tasks to conserve the natural and cultural heritage of the

cemetery and organise events to highlight this heritage. Volunteering opportunities will be promoted through the SADC website and residents newsletter to encourage local residents to become actively involved in site management.

The cemetery has considerable potential as a site for learning about conservation, sustainability and bereavement. Links should be developed with local colleges and universities to promote the site as a resource for students of psychology and social studies, and an example of how conservation can be integrated into human spaces connected by green corridors. Special interest groups would also benefit from more structured access to the cemetery, for example by having access to the chapel for meetings.

Through developing connections with special interest groups and experts on relevant topics it may be possible to hold guided walks open to all members of the public exploring the history and wildlife of the cemetery and the surrounding area. Events of this type could attract visitors who would not normally consider a cemetery as a place to connect with heritage. Holding wildlife recording events would also help to establish more complete environmental records for the site.

A period of public engagement accompanies the production of this management plan, enabling the local community and stakeholders to inform management of the site. All user groups with an interest in the site are aimed to be included in this process, and for their requirements to be considered as part of the planning process.

5.0 ACTION PLANS AND MAPS

The following action plans include ongoing management for which budget has been allocated and prospective actions which are subject to funding being secured.

5.1 Annual Actions

Ongoing management

Prospective actions

Ref no.	Action	Obj. Ref	When	Lead	Delivery	Funding Stream	Est. Cost	Spec . ref:	Status
0.1	Annual cut and collect of meadow areas	E3	Aug - Oct	SADC	SADC (JoC)	GM budget	Contract rates		
0.2	Maintain grass paths	C1, C3	Ongoing	SADC	SADC (JoC)	GM budget	Contract rates		
0.3	Manage vegetation	B1, C3	Ongoing	SADC	SADC (JoC)	GM budget	Contract rates		
0.4	Continue tree replacement strategy	B1, B3 C4, D1	When required	SADC	SADC (JoC)	GM budget	Contract rates	2	
0.5	Tree and hedge aftercare	B1, D1	When required	SADC	SADC (JoC)	GM budget	Contract rates		
0.6	SADC community news article	F2, F3	Quarterly	SADC	SADC	SADC budget	Staff time		

0.7	Undertake a tree safety survey every 3 years and carry out emergency tree work.	B3	Sep-Feb	SADC	SADC	Tree Budget	Staff time		
0.8	Undertake a memorial safety survey every 5 years and carry out repair works as necessary.	B2	Apr-Mar	SADC	SADC	SADC Budget	Contract rates		
0.9	Promote volunteering opportunities	F3	Ongoing	SADC	SADC	SADC Budget	Staff time		
0.10	Inspections of paths, signage and interpretation	C1	Ongoing	SADC	SADC (JoC)	GM budget	Contract rates		
0.11	Refuse collection	C3	Ongoing	SADC	SADC (JoC)	GM budget	Contract rates		
0.12	Liaise with site users and faith groups	A1	Ongoing	SADC	SADC	SADC Budget	Staff time		
0.13	Devise and run a programme of volunteer events and walks	D3, E4	Apr - Mar	SADC	SADC	SADC budget	Staff time		
0.14	Review annual actions	A1	Jan - Mar	SADC	SADC/CMS	SADC budget	Staff time		

Abbreviations: SADC – St Albans City & District Council; CMS – Countryside Management Service; JOC – John O’Connors; GM – Grounds Maintenance; Vols – Volunteers; SAMS – St Albans Museum Services;

Task Responsibility

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> SADC led | } Officer/Contractor delivered |
| <input type="checkbox"/> CMS led | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> SADC led | } Volunteer delivered |
| <input type="checkbox"/> CMS led | |

- Manage vegetation ☐
- Continue tree replacement strategy ☐
- Tree and hedge aftercare ☐
- SADC community news article ☐
- 3 yearly tree safety survey ☐
- 5 yearly memorial safety survey ☐
- Promote volunteering opportunities ☐
- Inspections of paths and signage ☐
- Refuse collection ☐
- Liaise with stakeholders ☐
- Arrange a programme of events ☐
- Review annual actions ☐

Hatfield Road Cemetery

Greenspace Action Plan Annual Actions

Legend

- Bench
- ▲ Entrance sign
- ▲ Interpretation sign
- Litter bin
- Water point
- compost
- Trees
- Hedgerow / woodland
- Scrub
- Summer meadow
- Amenity grass
- Ornamental beds
- Historic remains
- Building
- war memorial
- Fence
- Surfaced path
- Unsurfaced path

Cut and collect of
meadow areas ☐

Maintain grass paths ☐

Scale @ A4
1:2,250

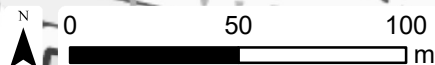
Date
May 2024

Version
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*Countryside
Management
Service*

St Albans
City & District Council

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5.2 Year 1

Ongoing management

Prospective actions

Ref no.	Action	Obj. Ref	When	Lead	Delivery	Funding Stream	Est. Cost	Spec . ref:	Status
1.1	Remove topsoil and leaning trees in natural burial area and build butterfly mound	E3	Apr - Aug	SADC	SADC/CMS	SADC budget	TBC	3, 4	
1.2	Sow wildflower meadow seed in natural burial area and wildflower areas	E3	Sep - Oct	SADC	SADC/CMS	SADC budget	£1500	5	
1.3	Secure external funding for prospective actions	C4	Apr - Mar	SADC	SADC/CMS	SADC budget	Staff time		
1.4	Condition survey of chapel and cemetery wall	D2	Apr – Mar	SADC	SADC/CMS	TBC	£1300		
1.5	Recruit a cemetery records volunteer	D2	Apr - Mar	SADC	SADC	SADC budget	Staff time		
1.6	Install historical interpretation	A4, D3 E4	Apr – Mar	SADC	SADC/CMS	TBC	£4000		
1.7	Establish a Friends of Hatfield Rd Cemetery Group	F3	Apr - Mar	SADC	SADC	SADC budget	Staff time		

1.8	Remove scrub from graves	C2	Apr – Mar	SADC	SADC (JoC)	GM budget	Contract rates	4	
1.9	Develop links with schools and colleges	D3, E4 F1	Apr - Mar	SADC	SADC	SADC budget	Staff time		
1.10	Install water butts	C4	Apr - Mar	SADC	SADC	SADC budget	£100		
1.11	Promote the chapel as a space for community groups	F3	Apr - Mar	SADC	SADC	SADC budget	Staff time		

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Task Responsibility

- | | |
|---|--------------------------------|
| SADC led | } Officer/Contractor delivered |
| CMS led | |
| SADC led | } Volunteer delivered |
| CMS led | |

Condition survey of chapel and cemetery wall



Install water butts



Install historical interpretation



Secure external funding



Recruit cemetery records volunteer



Remove scrub from graves



Develop links with colleges



Establish a Friends group



Open the chapel to community groups



Hatfield Road Cemetery

Greenspace Action Plan Year 1 Actions

Legend

- Bench
- ▲ Entrance sign
- ▲ Interpretation sign
- Litter bin
- Water point
- compost
- Trees
- Hedgerow
- Scrub
- Summer meadow
- Amenity grass
- Ornamental beds
- Historic remains
- Building
- war memorial
- Fence
- Surfaced path
- Unsurfaced path

Sow wildflower meadow seed



Remove topsoil and leaning trees in natural burial area



Scale @ A4
1:2,250

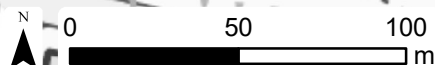
Date
May 2024

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5.3 Years 2 – 5

Ongoing management

Prospective actions

Ref no.	Action	Obj. Ref	When	Lead	Delivery	Funding Stream	Est. Cost	Spec . ref:	Status
2.1	Remove non-native hedge and plant native hedge	E2	Yr 2 Sep-Feb	CMS	Contractor/ CMS/Vols	SADC budget	TBC	2	
2.2	Create woodland path	A3, E4	Yr 2 Oct-Mar	SADC	SADC/CMS	SADC budget	Vol time		
2.3	Digitise cemetery records	D2	Yr 3	SADC	SADC/Vols	TBC	Vol time		
2.4	Review existing and produce new management plan		Yr 5 Apr-Mar	SADC	SADC/CMS	TBC	TBC		

Abbreviations: SADC – St Albans City & District Council; CMS – Countryside Management Service; JOC – John O’Connors; GM – Grounds Maintenance; Vols – Volunteers; SAMS – St Albans Museum Services;

Task Responsibility

- | | |
|---|--------------------------------|
| SADC led | } Officer/Contractor delivered |
| CMS led | |
| SADC led | } Volunteer delivered |
| CMS led | |

Digitise cemetery records



Produce new management plan



Hatfield Road Cemetery

Greenspace Action Plan
Year 2-5 Actions

Legend

- Bench
- ▲ Entrance sign
- ▲ Interpretation sign
- Litter bin
- Water point
- compost
- Trees
- Removed hedgerow
- Hedgerow
- Scrub
- Summer meadow
- Amenity grass
- Ornamental beds
- Historic remains
- Building
- War memorial
- Fence
- Surfaced path
- Unsurfaced path

Replace non-native hedge



Create woodland path



Remove non-native hedge



Plant native hedge



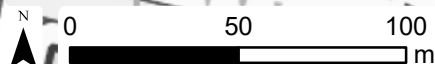
Scale @ A4
1:2,250

Date
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6.0 SPECIFICATIONS

1.	General prescriptions relevant to all works
Public safety	<p>The site is an active cemetery and work should be carried out sensitively with respect to public using the site as such. The public have access to all areas of the site.</p> <p>Members of the public to be kept a safe distance from works with signs and or banks men. Access routes may require temporary closure.</p> <p>Contractors shall be responsible for safeguarding all materials and plant on site and shall ensure that all such materials and plant in no way or at any time, represent a danger or risk to the general public or authorised persons.</p> <p>Work will be left safe at the end of the day and any hazards will be protected to prevent public access.</p>
Damage	<p>Any and all damage caused by the Contractor to land property or any other permanent features shall be required to be made good by the contractor at their own cost.</p> <p>All works around graves to be carried out sensitively to avoid disturbing the graves or damaging the associated memorials.</p>
Timing	<p>Unless otherwise stated, all habitat management work will be undertaken between 1st September and 28th February.</p> <p>All work will aim to be undertaken outside of wettest winter months to minimise damage to soils and tracks.</p>
Vehicles and equipment	<p>Machines and vehicles should not be left to idle and should be turned off to reduce air pollution and noise.</p> <p>Contractors should ensure that all equipment/plant/vehicles entering the work site be clean of all soil and plant material that may have accumulated from work on other sites. This is in order to prevent invasive plant species or other contaminant from being introduced to the site.</p>
Waste disposal	<p>All spoil and cut material should be removed from site and disposed of responsibly and in accordance with current waste legislation, and the site be left tidy.</p>

2.	Tree and hedge establishment
Details	<p>Provenance of trees should be from within the woodland or local landscape (transplant) where possible, or local nursery if brought in.</p> <p>To ensure the survival of new plantings best practice should be followed for their planting and aftercare. Handling time should be kept to a minimum and plants stored appropriately prior to planting. A 10cm layer of mulch should be spread around new plantings (not directly against the stem) to improve water retention and suppress weeds.</p> <p>Appropriate guards should be placed around stems to prevent damage during mowing.</p>
Timing	December allowing trees to be well watered in over winter

3.	Butterfly mound creation
Details	<p>Butterfly mounds should be built in a sunny location facing southwest.</p> <p>Soil should be built up in a concave shape to a minimum total height of 1 metre to create the mound and a shallow ditch should be made in front of the mound.</p> <p>The mound should be seeded with a mix of native wildflowers including nectar sources and larval foodplants.</p>
Timing	For best establishment, wildflower seeding should be undertaken in the autumn, ideally October, before the first frost.

4.	Scrub and hedge removal from around graves
Details	<p>The stumps of larger stems to be ground out to a minimum depth of 50mm to prevent regrowth without the use of herbicides. Aim to restore an even soil level to remove potential trip hazards.</p> <p>This must be carried out sensitively to avoid disturbing the graves or damaging the associated memorials.</p> <p>Arisings to be disposed of appropriately through removal off-site or through small amounts of deadwood stacking where suitable locations are available within the woodland .</p>
Timing	<p>Vegetation management requiring mechanised techniques and/ or vehicles to be undertaken in autumn, to avoid worst weather conditions.</p> <p>Lighter work involving hand tools only can be undertaken at any stage between September and February.</p>

5.	Wildflower Seeding
Details	<p>Provenance of wildflower and grass seed should be from the UK to avoid introducing invasive species. Species mix should be suitable for the conditions of the target area, such as Emorsgate EH1 Hedgerow Mixture. If the seed mix does not contain yellow rattle and red bartsia, these species should be hand sown into the grassland to reduce the abundance of grasses and promote the establishment of wildflowers.</p> <p>Ground must be scarified and soil loosened to create suitable surface for sowing. Native wildflower (and grass) seed should be surface sown thinly at approximately 4gms of seed per square metre. Damp sand can be mixed with the seed to act as a carrier and identify where seeds have been spread. Firm in with a roll, or by treading, to give good soil-seed contact.</p>
Timing	<p>For best establishment, wildflower seeding should be undertaken in the autumn, ideally October, before the first frost.</p>

7.0 APPENDICES
