

**The Wick**

**Greenspace Action Plan**

**2017 - 2022**



December 2017 v5



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## Amendments

Date Amended	Page Number	Section Updated	Details
05-09-17	0	Front page	Date, version number & extra logo
05-09-17	4	Contents	Addition of appendices
05-09-17	5	1 Site summary	Vision statement added 'and enjoy nature'
05-09-17	7	Site description map	Added bridge, realigned path, amended typo
05-09-17	12	2.8 Woodland	Paragraph 2, last sentence new & Para 4 amended
05-09-17	12	2.8 Ponds & ditches	Added last para
05-09-17	13	2.8 Wildlife	Added section on wildlife
05-09-17	13	2.9 Entrance signs	Para 1 amended end of sentence
05-09-17	13	2.9 Paths	Line 5 & 6 amended re previous surfacing
05-09-17	15	3.1 Signage/Interpretation	Parag 1 reworded, para 2 lockable notice boards, para 3 links to websites
05-09-17	15	3.1 Access, gates & fencing	Para 2 change dog bin to litter bin
05-09-17	15	3.1 Paths	Para 2 & 3 reworded
05-09-17	17	3.2 Tree surveys	Changed last word to relocated
05-09-17	17	3.2 Byelaws	Added section on byelaws
05-09-17	17	3.3 Young children's play area	Amended paragraph
05-09-17	17	3.3 Park furniture	Added para 3
05-09-17	17	3.5 Woodland	Reordered sections
05-09-17	17	3.5 Thinning	Para 1 added last 2 sentences, para 2 added first and last sentences
05-09-17	18	3.5 Invasive species removal	Added word rotational to first line and last sentence
05-09-17	18	3.5 New planting	Added words and laurel to first line
05-09-17	19	3.5 Hedgerows	Added section on hedgerows
05-09-17	19	3.5 Grassland	Removed section about extending margins, added last sentence
05-09-17	19	3.5 Ponds & ditches	Added last paragraph
05-09-17	20	3.6 Marketing	Reworded paragraph
05-09-17	20	3.6 Consultations & public feedback	Reworded paragraph
05-09-17	20	3.6 Events	Added section on events
05-09-17	22	4.0 - F1 Community Involvement	Added scouts and church
05-09-17	22	4.0 - F2 Community involvement	Added words Friends of The Wick
05-09-17	23	5.0 Five year action plan	Added sentence above table, added ref no column to tables
05-09-17	23	Action 0.18	Responsibility added CMS
05-09-17	25	Action 0.20	Action changed FoG to FoTW
05-09-17	27	Action 1.10	Removed increasing margins
05-09-17	29	Year 1 map	Added bridge, realigned path, added maintain new planting
05-09-17	30	Action 2.1	Added from year 1



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## 1.0 SITE SUMMARY

<b>Name</b>	The Wick
<b>Address</b>	Marshal's Drive, St Albans, Herts, AL1 4BQ
<b>Grid ref</b>	TL166083
<b>Size</b>	4.8 Hectares
<b>Owner</b>	St Albans City & District Council
<b>Designations</b>	Local Nature Reserve, Local Wildlife Site and a woodland Tree Preservation Order.

### VISION STATEMENT

The vision for The Wick is of a valued community resource for recreation and education that is easily accessible and a safe and enjoyable place to walk and enjoy nature.

This will be complemented by management that brings out the full potential of the site for biodiversity, in particular through sustainable woodland management to maintain semi-natural woodland for future generations to enjoy.

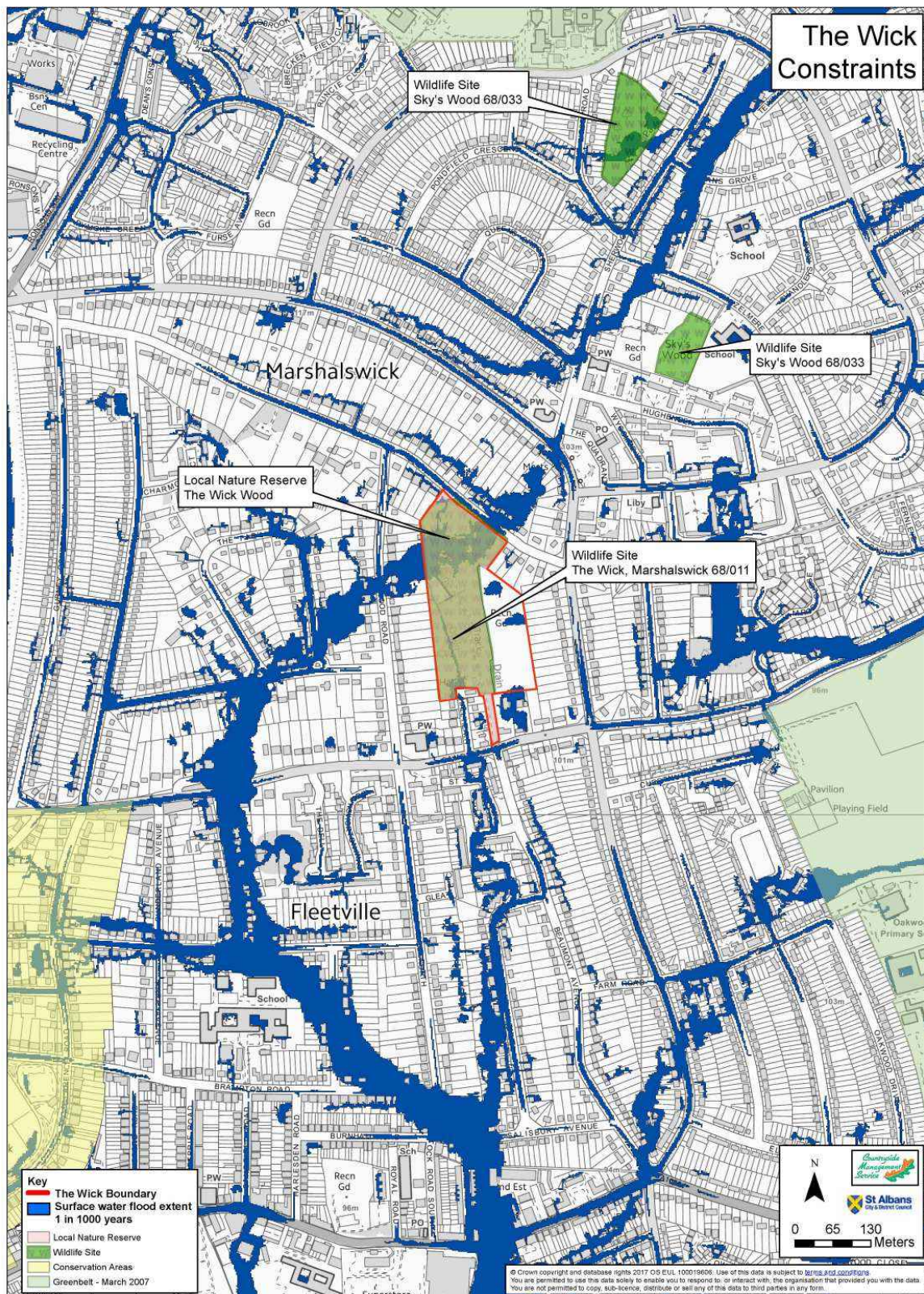














## 2.4 INTRODUCTION

The Wick is located in the residential area of Marshalswick in St Albans, between Sandpit Lane and Marshal's Drive. The 4.8 hectare site comprises 3.3 ha of woodland and 1.5 ha of informal playing field with conservation grassland margins. There is a small play area in the wood.

The Wick is situated in an area underlain by boulder clay, with areas of sand, gravel and acid soil. The main habitat of the site is ancient semi-natural woodland dominated by oak and hornbeam. Due to its wildlife value, the woodland at The Wick is designated as a Local Wildlife Site as well as, since 1995, a Local Nature Reserve. In 1985 a woodland Tree Preservation Order (ref: 1130), protecting specific tree species, was placed on the woodland area of the Wick. This means that work on most of the species present requires consent from the city and district council's Trees and Woodlands Department.

The site supports a wide range of wildlife, including over 30 bird species. The Wick also has a seasonal pond, remains of historic field boundaries and veteran hornbeam and oak trees. The playing field is largely close-mown and managed for amenity, with longer grass along the edges providing a more natural buffer to the wood and other boundaries.

The Wick is used by the community as a place for quiet relaxation, a pleasant walk to the shops, safe route to school and recreation. The 18<sup>th</sup> St Albans Scout group from the adjacent scout hut are regular users. The Wick is particularly well used by dog walkers, some of whom travel some distance for their visit. A network of formal paths and 'desire-lines' criss-cross the site.

The Wick has an active Friends group who carry out practical management tasks twice a year, tasks drawn from the management plan include path maintenance and litter picks. They also organise and run events such as guided walks.

## 2.5 REVIEW OF PROGRESS

This plan replaces The Wick Greenspace Action Plan 2011 - 2016. Under that plan, small-scale woodland management has been initiated to start to increase the age-range of the trees in the wood. Small groups of mature trees (mostly sycamore) have been felled to provide areas where light can reach the woodland floor. In these areas, young trees are being established, through planting and natural regeneration. Some of these areas are now suffering from trampling and compaction where desire lines have been created. The same is the case for other areas of the wood, especially along the path through the west of the site. Areas of laurel throughout the woodland have been cleared and replanted with native shrubs and hedging.

An increasing number of tree pests and diseases are becoming a threat to our trees, including Ash Dieback and Oak Processionary Moth, and these are likely to impact on The Wick in coming years.

Conservation grassland management has been introduced around the edges of the playing field. This helps to create a transition of habitats from amenity cut grassland to areas of tall herbs/ long grass, brambles and low scrub that all buffer the woodland and adjacent residential properties, providing an excellent habitat for wildlife.

Welcome signs have been installed at the two entrances.

Collection of litter and dog waste operations are carried out through the grounds maintenance contract.

## 2.6 GEOGRAPHY AND LANDSCAPE

The Wick is a small site (4.8 ha) located in the residential area of Marshalswick in St Albans. Although small in size, The Wick is a popular and well used community green space. With 3.3 ha of woodland and 1.5 ha of informal playing field with areas of conservation grassland, a pond and small play area there is plenty for everyone.

The Wick is subject to a number of statutory and non-statutory designations see table 1 and the constraints map.

**Table 1** – Statutory and non-statutory designations

Scale	Designation	Detail
National	Local Nature Reserve (LNR)	The Wick Wood designated in 1995
County	Local Wildlife Site	The Wick, Marshalwick – 68/011
District / Borough	Woodland Tree Preservation Order	1985 (ref: 1130)

## 2.7 HISTORY AND ARCHAEOLOGY

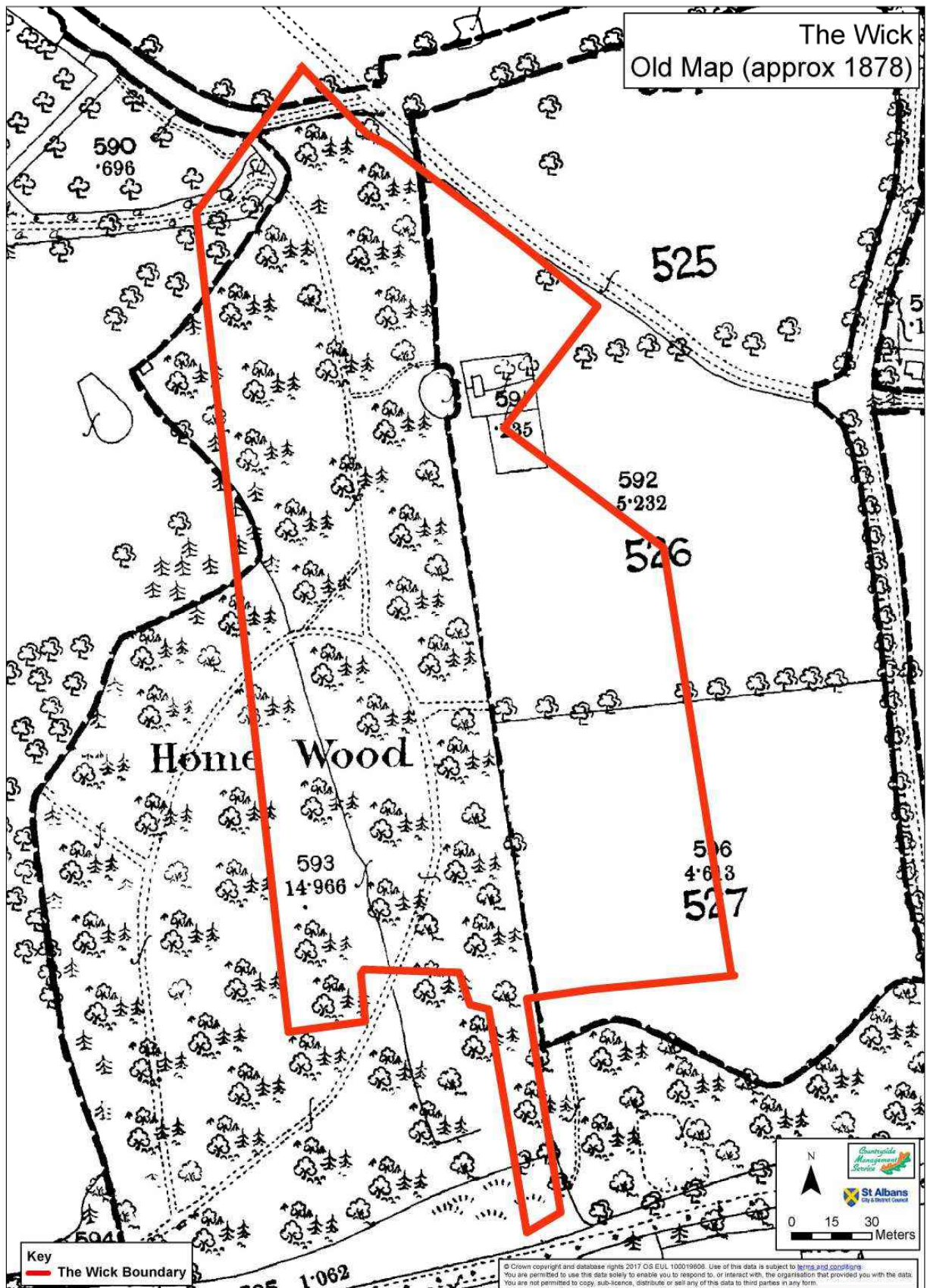
In 1929 the land was transferred into the ownership of St Albans City and District Council by Sir Arthur Copson Peake.

The woodland at The Wick is over 400 years old with a number of mature hornbeam and oak trees throughout the wood. A seasonal pond and historic field boundaries of bank and ditch are still visible across the site. These historic features need to be retained.

There were once two cottages within a fenced plot in the parkland of what was once Marshalswick estate. The plot was divided into two gardens, behind which there was a pond on the edge of the woodland (then called Home Wood, later Wick Wood). By 1898 the woodland had been extended on the north side of the cottages and their fencing had gone; by 1924 the cottages had been demolished. The woodland has extended across the site; the pond survived and is the one you can see on site today – see The Wick Old Map.

The ditches and banks are dated tentatively to the Roman period, but could be medieval as they seem to pre-date the Wick. The fact that there are upstanding monuments in this area is significant, as normally they are mostly levelled through agriculture. The banks and ditches in the Wick woodland are survivors of a much larger area which has been levelled. They continue outside of the present boundary. The reason that they may be Roman is that the local material that has been found suggests burials, which may relate to a focus at, or close to, the Wick.

With the help of volunteers and the council's archaeological department a geophysical survey could be undertaken on the site to map the ditch and banks.





## 2.8 HABITATS AND WILDLIFE

### *Woodland*

The ancient semi-natural woodland of The Wick has several veteran oak and hornbeam trees amongst a mix of ash, silver birch, sycamore, holly, hazel, elder, yew and patches of laurel. The remaining trees in the Wick are mostly of a similar age, and a uniform structure is developing with a closed canopy. Where young trees are trying to grow they struggle to find the space and light required to promote good growth to be able to provide mature trees for the future.

In small woodlands natural processes are not sufficient to maintain a varied structure through natural disturbance and subsequent new growth. Human intervention by planned practical conservation management is required to help reach the same outcome. Throughout the last plan period selective mature trees have been removed to create the effect of a natural process, this has allowed light to reach the ground floor and promote new growth of dormant seedlings. Maintaining standing deadwood is part of woodland management, it is an important part of the woodland biodiversity and provides habitat for a variety of plants and wildlife.

Areas of planting have already been undertaken by the entrance onto Sandpit Lane and by the play area where a dead hedge has been created to protect the new plants from trampling.

There are patches of laurel mainly in the southern corner of the wood. Laurel is an invasive species which produces dense shade and prevents other plants from growing in its vicinity though the leaching of chemicals into the soil. Some removal of laurel has occurred during the last plan this will continue.

There are bird and bat boxes scattered throughout the woodland, it is unknown if these are monitored or maintained. Ivy plays an important part in woodlands providing nesting sites for birds, roosting sites for bats and is a valuable source of nectar for many insects.

### *Hedgerows*

A native broadleaved hedgerow was planted at the southern end of the informal playing field to replace a laurel hedge that was removed. The trees are starting to establish well but need continued maintenance, there are a few remnants of laurel that still need to be removed and chemically treated.

### *Grassland*

The playing field has a conservation margin developing around the edge to provide a transition from amenity cut grassland, through grasses, tall herbs, brambles and low scrub, before finally becoming woodland. By buffering the woodland and adjacent residential properties it adds protection and provides excellent habitats for wildlife.

The access point into the grassland from the northern end by the pond becomes extremely muddy and slippery in the winter with pedestrian and vehicle movements.

### *Pond & Ditches*

The pond in the Wick is ephemeral, meaning it dries up for part or all of the year. It is an important wildlife habitat that does not support fish allowing the invertebrate and amphibian species to breed free from predation. The shallow nature of the pond means that the flag iris, which is a native plant can start to dominate the pond shading out what little water there is.

The pond is becoming increasingly shaded out by the surrounding trees which drop leaves into the water, resulting in accumulations of leaf litter. The fence around the pond protecting it from dogs has seen better days and is in need of some repair.

The historic field boundaries of bank and ditch are still visible across the site. These historic features need to be retained.

### *Wildlife*

The Wick LNR provides suitable breeding and overwintering habitat for bird common species such as Great Tit and Blackbird and woodland species such as Treecreeper and Nuthatch. In the late spring and summer warblers such as Chiffchaff visit the site and can be heard calling out their name 'Chiff-Chaff Chiff-Chaff'. While in the winter months Redwing and Fieldfare may be glimpsed sitting on the tops of the trees. Over recent years several new informal paths have appeared and the number of dogs roaming throughout the site has increased. This will have an effect on nesting birds across the site due to disturbance and the reduction in ground cover.

Common frogs have been recorded on the site, using the pond and feeding in the woodland and grassland margins. Mammals recorded on site include grey squirrel and brown rat. From the surrounding area there are a few records of hedgehog, fox, rabbit, bank vole and common shrew which may venture into the sight at night. Pipistrelle bat has been recorded in the neighbourhood and would potentially use The Wick LNR as a corridor for feeding and flight. Butterflies and moths use the LNR feeding on the various vegetation types present. Speckled Wood can be found in the dappled shade amongst the tall herbs, low scrub and along the woodland paths, while others like Red Admiral and Comma prefer the more grassy areas.

## **2.9 ACCESS, FACILITIES AND INFRASTRUCTURE**

### *Entrances and Car Parking*

There are two pedestrian entrances to The Wick one from Marshal's Drive the other from Sandpit Lane. Both entrances have iron gates and fencing, in keeping with the local area. Being closed gives the appearance of not being allowed to enter. There is no car park for the site but visitors tend to park along Marshal's Drive adjacent to the houses. Care must be taken not to block any driveways.

There is a vehicle access gate for maintenance work next to the pedestrian gate on Marshal's Drive.

### *Entrance Signs*

The entrance gates do not have signs with the sites' name on but signs telling you what you should and should not do. The gate on Sandpit Lane gate has a small metal sign that reads 'shut the gate' while the one on the gate on Marshal's Drive informs you that cycling is not permitted through the woodland.

There are two large carved wooden entrance signs, one at each of the pedestrian entrances onto the site. These were installed when the site was designated a Local Nature Reserve, they are attractive but having weathered well are starting to look a bit tired making them hard to read. There is nowhere to display local information about the site or any interpretation panels about the history and wildlife of The Wick.

### *Paths*

There are two main formal paths that run through the woodland one from the pedestrian gate on Marshal's Drive to the entrance on Sandpit Lane, the other takes in the western side of the wood and crosses several small bridges over historic ditches. Both paths have been

surfaced in the past and are now in need of some maintenance, to cope with the increased usage of the site. The paths are becoming wider and the ground is becoming trampled and compacted as people deviate from the path. There are a lot of informal paths that criss-cross the woodland, opening up areas that were once more secluded.

#### *Young Children's Play Area*

There is a small well used young children's play area at the southern end of the wood, near to the scout hut. The play area is enclosed with fencing and an access gate. The fencing and gate need some attention as the gate intermittently does not shut, so small children could get out easily into the main woodland. There are benches and litter bins within and just outside the play area. The play equipment is becoming slightly dated. The contract specification requires the contractor to carry out daily recorded inspections, and to carry out minor repairs. More major repairs and improvements are carried out by the Council.

The whole site is inspected annually in October, by an independent company. The company's detailed annual report is used by the Council to guide its annual playground repairs and improvements programme, with the work carried out during the following April to October period.

#### *Dog and Litter Bins*

There are several litter and dog refuse bins around the site. The use of one bin for both types of refuse is being used across other Council owned green spaces and will be rolled out across The Wick in due course.

## **2.10 COMMUNITY, MANAGEMENT AND EVENTS**

#### *Leases*

A 25 year lease has been granted to the 18<sup>th</sup> St Albans Scouts (start date 2000) for the scout hut.

#### *Grounds Maintenance Contract*

The rest of The Wick, is included within the grounds maintenance contract, this includes emptying litter and dog bins, tree surveys, amenity and conservation grass cutting and general site checks.

#### *Utilities Access*

There are two small substations near to the Sandpit Lane end of the site; the utilities companies have access through the site to their facilities for maintenance purposes.

#### *Fitness Groups*

The Council has a permit scheme in place to allow formal fitness sessions to be run at The Wick throughout the year. They provide an important service to local residents and it is important that a clear framework is in place to ensure that their activities do not have a negative impact on the site and users. Permits are granted on a case by case basis.

#### *Park Management*

The direct management responsibility for The Wick rests with St Albans City and District Council, the Council works closely with Countryside Management Service (CMS), the local community and Friends group to manage the site.

#### *Council Website*

The Council provides a dedicated webpage for The Wick <http://www.stalbans.gov.uk/leisure-and-culture/parks-and-green-space/Green-Spaces/TWLNR.aspx>

## 3.0 ANALYSIS AND EVALUATION

### 3.1 A WELCOMING PLACE

#### *Signage/Interpretation*

By installing new metal signs on the entrance gates in keeping with the current fencing, with 'The Wick – Local Nature Reserve' on, will instantly improve the look of the entrance and make visitors feel welcome.

Providing lockable notice boards at the two main entrances where local information about guided walks, the friend's group activities can be displayed will improve visitor's first impressions, making the site feel more inviting and welcoming. The notice boards need to be kept up to date otherwise it can give the appearance of being uncared for.

Interpretation panels depicting the history and wildlife of the site should be designed and installed near to the two main entrances. The panel will include a site map to help orientate users around the site; this will help to keep people to the designated paths only. Links to where additional information can be found will be provided. External funding will need to be sought to carry out these improvements.

#### *Access, Gates and Fencing*

The site is not locked but does have access gates and fencing. Much of the boundary fencing is shared with adjoining landowners. Therefore, fence maintenance and repair is usually restricted to small areas such as the main entrances and children's play area. The fencing at both main entrances should be periodically repainted when required to improve the appearance of the site. All gates should be checked regularly and any maintenance carried out, making the pedestrian gates self-closing will be looked into, which will make sure that any stray dogs or children cannot run out into the road.

Both entrances can easily be made more inviting, by moving the litter bin away from the routed entrance sign at the Marshal's Drive entrance and by clearing round the new planting at the Sandpit Lane entrance.

#### *Paths*

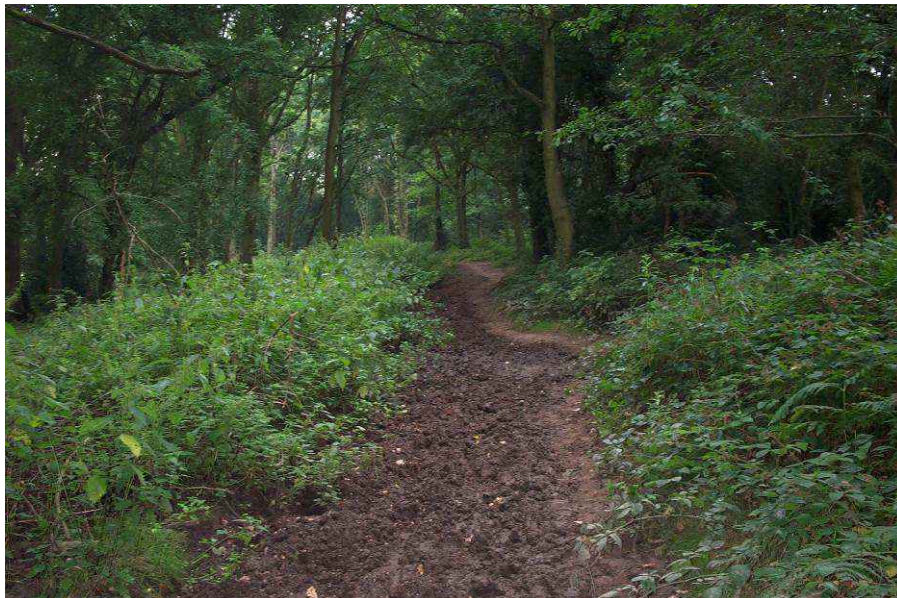
During the winter regularly used paths around the woodland get exceptionally muddy, these areas tend to increase in width as people walk round the problem creating increased compaction to the surrounding area. This provides problems in the spring, with the ground being too compacted for vegetation to break through, the woodland floor then becomes devoid of vegetation. Compaction can be seen across large areas of the woodland.

To try and reduce the damage to the woodland and encourage people to stay on the path, the surfaced paths will be reinstated around the woodland to make a suitable walking surface all year long. Paths will be surfaced using clean recycled concrete aggregate or virgin aggregate, which are permeable materials so that water can drain away. Disruption will be kept to a minimum when carrying out the works. Using woodchip is unsuitable as it soaks up the water and creates boggy patches, which makes it difficult for people with buggies, wheelchairs or mobility scooters to cross. It can also pose a biosecurity risk. The main path from Marshal's Drive to Sandpit Lane and into the grassland (at the northern and southern ends) will be wide enough and of a suitable specification for use by maintenance, utility and emergency service vehicles. The footpath around the west of the site will be only suitable for pedestrians. By the play area a vehicle crossing point will be installed over the western footpath to allow access into the south west corner of the woodland. This will be in the form of a sleeper installed either side of the path, so when vehicles cross no weight is put onto the path surface. No vehicle access is intended from Sandpit Lane.

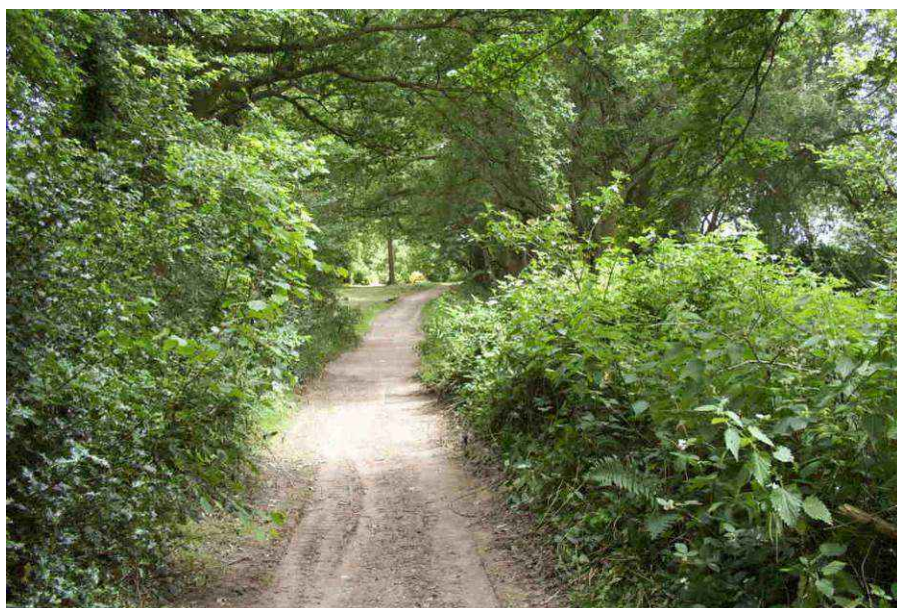


There are three pedestrian sleeper bridges around the site and a small bridge by the play area that becomes slippery when wet. Weld mesh should be added to the sleepers to improve them.

External funding needs to be sought to be able to take forward the proposed path improvements.



Woodland before path surfacing



Woodland after path surfacing

### **3.2 HEALTHY, SAFE AND SECURE**

Site risk assessments are carried out to evaluate the potential risks throughout the site to all users. They are reviewed and updated every year and monitored through the regular client/contractor site inspections.

In addition the grounds maintenance contractor produces risk assessments for their staff and equipment, which are also monitored through the contract inspection procedures.

### *Tree Surveys*

The grounds maintenance contractor is responsible for carrying out a tree safety survey every 3 years. This information is fed back to the Council's Trees and Woodland Team for analysis and action. One ongoing action is to remove deadwood from trees overhanging the paths. Where possible deadwood should be allowed to remain especially on the large oaks as it provides valuable habitat, when a limb falls it should be left in situ – benches should not be installed beneath large trees and any that are should be relocated (see 3.5 veteran trees).

### *Byelaws*

The byelaws for open spaces will be updated by the Council and they will include responsible dog ownership and cycling.

## **3.3 CLEAN AND WELL MAINTAINED**

### *Young Children's Play Area*

The young children's play area is becoming outdated. Funding needs to be sought to be able to update the play equipment, when it reaches the end of its life. However, there is no intention to change the size or location of the play area.

### *Park Furniture*

The site has a mixture of wooden and plastic benches; the wooden benches are painted and stained every year through the grounds maintenance contract. When new benches are installed they need to be level and each one should have a level area next to them large enough to accommodate a wheelchair/pushchair and person pushing it. Benches should not be situated under large trees as this leads to unnecessary tree works. Any benches under large trees, like some of those around the playing field should be relocated.

As litter and dog refuse bins reach the end of their life they are to be replaced with single bins for use as both litter and dog refuse. Signage will need to be installed to explain the change to users as they become accustomed. The maintenance and emptying of the bins is also included within the contract specification.

A new bin will be installed in the grassland by the top bench and two recycling bins will be installed to replace the existing bins at the main entrance from Marshall's Drive and by the paly area.

## **3.4 SUSTAINABILITY**

By buying trees from a reputable supplier that are suitable for the site, of the right provenance for the area and UK grown will reduce the risk of bringing in infectious diseases. Where possible natural regeneration is best practice and should be the restocking method of choice (see appendix 6.3).

## **3.5 CONSERVATION AND HERITAGE**

### *Woodland*

#### *Thinning*

By removing small numbers of trees throughout the woodland will help to create gaps in the canopy sufficient to allow light to penetrate to the ground flora, speeding up the natural process. The areas identified are adjacent to the main path to maximise the area of light penetration. Where possible the mature trees identified for removal will be sycamore. Sycamore will be chosen over mature native species as they are invasive in this situation and threaten to spread throughout the woodland, replacing the typical, native tree species. Regrowth of sycamore saplings will be monitored and pulled if required. Areas will be

monitored for natural regeneration and additional planting will only be undertaken if deemed necessary.

The trees around the play area require lifting, to maintain light levels and reduce shading. The south west corner of the woodland behind the play area is densely populated with hornbeam which should be thinned to allow the trees to grow to maturity. A percentage of cut material will be left on site as habitat and used to block informal paths; the remainder will be removed from the site, with some available for the local community as fire wood if applicable.

In the north west corner of the woodland holly has become quite dominant; by reducing the amount of trees in this area more light will be able to reach the woodland floor promoting regeneration of seedlings. The nearby depression if it does not lie wet throughout the winter can be planted up with native species, if there is no natural regeneration which can be protected and managed to grow to maturity.

#### Invasive Species Removal

The continuation of rotational laurel removal from the woodland will provide more areas for native ground flora to thrive and reduce the chances of the laurel spreading throughout the woodland, stumps are to be treated with an appropriate herbicide. There are remnant patches of laurel in the newly planted broadleaved hedgerow at the south west corner of the playing field; these should also be removed and treated. Areas will be replanted with native species if there is no evidence of any regrowth within the first year, any regrowth/new planting will be protected – see below.

#### Veteran Trees

There are a large number of veteran trees - mainly oak and hornbeam in the woodland, that need to be managed sensitively for their landscape value and biodiversity. This will be done in line with advice from the Woodland Trust and Ancient Tree Forum. A plan has been developed (see appendix 6.4) to provide advice on their management, which will include things like leaving large branches where they fall and removing epicormic growth. Benches should be removed from beneath the large trees to stop unnecessary pollarding of branches (see 3.2 tree surveys).

Deadwood is a valuable habitat for a variety of wildlife and should be maintained, however deadwood overhanging paths should be removed to maintain public safety (see 3.2 tree surveys).

#### New Planting

The selective removal of mature trees and laurels in order to provide temporary openings in the woodland canopy will provide the conditions for good quality regeneration of native trees species, particularly oak and hornbeam. Some native planting may need to be carried out as oak in particular struggles to regenerate as well as some of the other species. Regeneration of native trees will need to be encouraged and potential competition from sycamore seedlings addressed through regular removal. New planting or regeneration should be protected with suitable tree guards to help protect the new trees from trampling and browsing. Bramble will quickly colonise the newly cleared areas and offer some additional although limited protection to the new plants.

The dead hedge by the play area protecting the newly planted trees should be retained and strengthened until the new paths have been installed and the vegetation has established within the planted area. The area could be extended slightly and a few additional trees planted. Current trees should be protected with tree guards and stakes rather than spiral guards and canes, these will add greater protection to the trees as they grow.

All new trees will need aftercare management to help them to establish. Around each newly planted/protected tree a buffer of about 1m should be maintained to stop other plants – like brambles from shading out the new trees. Once established, after 7-10 years, the canopy of the new trees should begin to suppress the bramble growth.

To preserve The Wick and not bring in any unsuitable species, an agreed species list has been developed (see appendix 6.3). This includes details of what and where to plant, suppliers and the best method for planting – which includes stakes, protection, watering and aftercare.

#### *Hedgerows*

All new hedgerows should be planted with native species consisting mainly of hawthorn, hazel and the odd field maple. Clear spiral guards and canes should be used to protect the plants from being trodden on and so that they can be easily located when weeding round them.

New native species hedgerows will be planted around the edges of The Wick, in front of the boundary fences. The hedgerows will be maintained and the ownership of any non-native species will be investigated. The newly planted hedgerows at the southern end of the grassland and by the entrance from Sandpit Lane need regular aftercare maintenance to stop the plants from becoming swamped with vegetation.

#### *Grassland*

The majority of the grassland at The Wick is managed as an amenity cut. This is where it is cut twice a month during the growing season as part of the grounds maintenance contract. The conservation margins are now established and act as a buffer between the woodland providing valuable habitat for invertebrates; comprising mainly of longer grasses and tall herbs before changing to low scrub and woodland. The margins are cut and collected once a year in the autumn, after the plants have seeded, to remove the build-up of vegetation and promote new growth. No development is planned on the grassland or any other part of The Wick LNR.

#### *Pond and Ditches*

Normally the depth of water in a pond ensures that flag iris remains as a marginal plant, but due to the ephemeral nature of the pond, the flag iris dominates in the summer months shading out what little water the pond holds. There is a concern that deepening the pond may lead to a loss in the pond's ability to hold water as the ground beneath it has pockets of gravel and it cannot be guaranteed that it has a solid clay bottom for any depth.

Due to the sensitive nature of ponds and not knowing exactly what the base is made up of, the pond should not be deepened. By hand encroaching grasses can be removed and flag iris dug out every three years to maintain the area of open water. Any material removed from the pond can be stacked on the lower area inside the fencing of the pond and allowed to rot down. Small amounts of leaf litter can be removed but must be left around the edges of the pond until all the water and any invertebrates have found their way back into the pond, then it can be moved and added to the flag iris pile. Any litter should also be removed from site.

Trees directly around the pond by the fence need to be pollarded and coppiced to allow more light to reach the pond. Hazel coppice stools to the south of the pond need to be re-coppiced in the same winter period to allow sufficient light to regenerate from the stools the following summer. This has been undertaken previously and was very successful in producing new vigorous growth. Re-coppicing of these stools at intervals of approximately 5 - 7 years will ensure their long term survival and prevent tall growth from shading the pond.



The current fencing around the pond is in need of replacement. The new fencing should be stock proof with half round rails around the top; this will protect the pond from dogs and provide viewing access for people. A small stile will be included in the fence line for maintenance purposes and to rescue any dogs that may find their way into the pond. The fencing can be extended slightly to the south east of the pond to include the low lying area; the works can be carried out by volunteers.

There are several historic ditches throughout the woodland which will be preserved. Investigations will be undertaken to assess their condition and how they connect to the pond.

### **3.6 COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT**

#### *Marketing*

The Wick has its own web page that is updated when required. Although it is a small site in a residential area The Wick could still be promoted more to local people as a place to go to get close to nature, this could be done via the 'Friends of The Wick'. This will allow new and existing people to understand what other aspects of interest are present on site e.g. historical and biodiversity.

#### *Volunteering*

There is a local 'Friends of The Wick' volunteer group who run two practical conservation tasks a year on site and hold an annual committee meeting. Additional volunteer help is provided by the Countryside Management Service (CMS) volunteers. Volunteer involvement includes pond maintenance, removal and replacing the fence around the pond, installation of notice boards and interpretation panels, aftercare of planted trees and species recording and monitoring.

Continued support is to be given to the 'Friends' group to enable them to continue to carry out the valuable work that they do on the site.

#### *Consultations and Public Feedback*

Stakeholders, Cllrs and Friends of The Wick were consulted on The Wick GAP Briefing document. The Draft GAP, a continuation of the previous GAP was available on the Council's website for people to comment on during the consultation period; posters were put up on site telling people how to get involved. All relevant responses have been incorporated into the document.

#### *Events*

All official events to be held at The Wick LNR, would need to apply for a licence which is granted by Safety Advisory Group (SAG), run by the Councils Community Engagement team. Licences go to stakeholders for approval. Events would be community based (mostly around the Friends of The Wick work days, Easter egg hunts etc. that currently occur) any other large events would need to be licenced and local residents would be fully engaged beforehand.

## **4.0 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES**

### **A A WELCOMING PLACE**

To make The Wick a safe and welcoming site for visitors.

- A1 Maintain all site entrances to form welcoming, appealing gateways to the site.
- A2 Install lockable noticeboards to display posters and interpretation panels to provide visitors with information about the history and wildlife of the site.
- A3 Improve access around the site by resurfacing the main path and by surfacing the western the path through the woodland. This will reduce the impact on the other informal paths in the woodland.
- A4 Maintain site boundary.

### **B HEALTHY, SAFE AND SECURE**

To ensure that visitors feel safe and secure in all areas of The Wick.

- B1 Carryout regular risk assessments of the site's facilities, natural features and general environment.
- B2 Carry out regular surveys, inspections and maintenance of the trees, paths, furniture and structures to ensure their condition and integrity is maintained. Undertake any works required. This should include a proposal for a geophysical survey of the site, especially of the area of grassland, to integrate it with the historic elements in the woodland, to help create a more cohesive site overall.
- B3 Ensure existing play area facilities are maintained in safe and serviceable condition.

### **C CLEAN AND WELL MAINTAINED**

To ensure all fixtures and fittings are in a safe and serviceable condition.

- C1 Monitor the grounds maintenance regimes to ensure they comply with the agreed high standard.
- C2 Ensure all fixtures and fittings are regularly maintained.

### **D SUSTAINABILITY**

To ensure ongoing costs are sustainable and secure external funding for capital works.

- D1 Ensuring ongoing maintenance costs are financially sustainable.
- D2 Securing external funding to ensure the viability of capital works.

### **E CONSERVATION AND HERITAGE**

To conserve and enhance the natural and historic environment of The Wick.

- E1 Continue sustainable woodland management to create diversity in species, age and structure, including through thinning in the over-shaded south-west corner, selection and felling of small groups elsewhere, complete removal of laurel and reduction/coppicing of over-shading holly while avoiding widening the paths.

- E2 Protect the historic environment, to sympathetically undertake any alterations with consideration to the historic significance of the site, including the banks and ditches, as well as the adjacent open space.
- E3 Ensure existing and new temporary clearings are sufficiently large to provide enough light for the target tree species and prevent trampling of the regrowth / ground flora, providing physical barriers where necessary.
- E4 Plant only native trees of appropriate UK provenance and provide aftercare to all new trees and shrubs.
- E5 Control sycamore but retain as an element of the woodland to safeguard species diversity for the future.
- E6 Protect the woodland from pests and diseases through sustainable management practices (as above). Avoid importing any plant material into the site from another source where possible and/or ensure all such materials are pest/disease free.
- E7 Plan for the potential effects of Ash Dieback following guidance on best practice at the time.
- E8 Manage grassland to reflect the needs of recreation and biodiversity.
- E9 Maintain boundary hedges and thickets.
- E10 Restore and maintain the pond including replacing the fence.
- E11 Promote the creation of a wildlife refuge in a quiet area of The Wick.

## **F COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT**

To provide opportunities for the local community to engage with The Wick.

- F1 Organise and enable an annual programme of events and activities with partners including the Friends of The Wick, Local Scout Troop and Homewood Road Church group.
- F2 Consider relevant activities within this plan as potential tasks for volunteer groups including the Friends of The Wick and CMS mid-week team.
- F3 Supporting volunteer activity at The Wick and to ensure all involved operate towards achievement of the GAP.
- F4 Undertake geophysical surveys using volunteers.
- F5 Consult users and local people during the production of management plans.

## **G MARKETING**

Maintain and develop a strong identity for The Wick that fosters a sense of ownership and pride to fully realise its value as an open space.

- G1 Develop an annual programme of events and activities with partners including the Friends and the community; raising awareness and interest in The Wick.
- G2 Promote awareness and interest in The Wick.

## 5.0 FIVE YEAR ACTION PLAN

All dates in the action plan are subject to change, depending on resources and funding.

### 5.1 ANNUAL ITEMS

Ref no:	Action	Obj. no:	When	Responsibility	Funding	Estimated Cost	Spec. ref:	Status (completed/ comments)
0.1	Play area inspection and undertake any repairs as required	B1, B2, B3	Weekly	SADC (JOC)	GM Budget			
0.2	Play area service	B3	Every 6 months	SADC (JOC)	GM Budget			
0.3	Inspect all paths undertake repairs as required	A3, B1, B2	Every 6 months	SADC (JOC)				
0.4	Commission an independent inspection of play area and carry out identified improvements/repairs	B3	Annually	SADC				
0.5	Condition survey of The Wick's boundary and internal fences/gates; undertake repairs as required	A4, E9	Every 6 months	SADC (JOC)	GM Budget			
0.6	Health & Safety inspections and undertaking of works	B1, B2	When required	SADC	GM Budget			
0.7	Empty dog waste bins minimum once a week or when required	C1	All year	SADC	GM Budget			
0.8	Empty litter bins on a weekly basis	C1	All year	SADC	GM Budget			



Ref no:	Action	Obj. no:	When	Responsibility	Funding	Estimated Cost	Spec. ref:	Status (completed/ comments)
0.9	Litter pick and check for problems	C1	Daily	FoTW				
0.10	Maintain a programme of information on The Wick's notice boards with a content review every month (once installed)	A2	Monthly	SADC/FoTW				
0.11	Refurbish and stain all benches (some are plastic)	C2	Annual	SADC (JOC)	GM Budget			
0.12	Remove all graffiti in accordance with the District Council's graffiti policy	B1	When required	SADC	GM Budget			
0.13	Management of vegetation through the Grounds Maintenance Contract	C1, E8, E9	Apr – Oct	SADC	GM Budget			
0.14	Complete bi-annual tree safety survey and undertake emergency tree work	B1, B2	Apr & Oct	SADC	Tree Budget?			
0.15	Tree management – thinning, coppicing, planting, aftercare, formative pruning, veteran trees – see individual years for more detail	B2, E1, E3-E7, E9, E10, E11	Ongoing	SADC				
0.16	Make sure any new benches are level and have space next to them to accommodate wheelchairs/pushchairs or provide a surfaced pad	C2	Apr & Oct	SADC				

Ref no:	Action	Obj. no:	When	Responsibility	Funding	Estimated Cost	Spec. ref:	Status (completed/ comments)
0.17	Friends of The Wick led volunteer/community events and walks at The Wick	F1-F3, G1, G2	Ongoing	SADC/FoTW	Staff Time			
0.18	Contribute to The Wick Committee Meetings	F1-F3	Twice a year	SADC/FoTW/ CMS				
0.19	Liaise with other users	F1, F5, G1, G2	Ongoing	SADC				
0.20	Develop and promote FoTW	F1-F2, G1, G2	Ongoing	SADC/ CMS/Vols	CMS Officer	n/a	n/a	
0.21	Update The Wicks webpage when required	G2	When required	SADC				
0.22	Review and update annual action plans		Spring	SADC/CMS FoTW				

**Abbreviations:**

CMS – Countryside Management Service  
SADC – St Albans City & District Council  
Vols - Volunteers

FoTW – Friends of The Wick  
JOC – John O’Connors  
GM – Grounds Maintenance

## 5.2 YEAR 1 ACTION PLAN 2017-18

Ref no:	Action	Obj. no:	When	Responsibility	Funding	Estimated Cost	Spec. ref:	Status (completed/ comments)
1.1	Carry out improvements to all entrances in to The Wick – relocation of bins, new signage on gate, paint fence, fix gates	A1-A4, G2	Summer	CMS				
1.2	Install notice boards	A2, F2, F3, G3	Summer	CMS/FoTW/ Vols				
1.3	Design and install new interpretation panels	A2, F2, F3, G3	Summer	CMS/SADC/ FoTW/Vols				
1.4	Resurface paths through woodland - main path, western path and paths into grassland	A3, D1, D2	Summer	CMS				
1.5	Undertake bridge repairs	A3, D1, D2	Summer	CMS/ FoTW/ Vols				
1.6	Resurface pad next to bench in grassland, assess to see if any others need one	A3, D1, D2	Summer	CMS/ FoTW/ Vols				
1.7	Mend play area gate and install new equipment	B3	Spring	SADC				
1.8	Change all litter bins to recycling bins	C1	N/A	SADC				



Ref no:	Action	Obj. no:	When	Responsibility	Funding	Estimated Cost	Spec. ref:	Status (completed/ comments)
1.9	Relocate benches from beneath tree canopies to avoid unnecessary pruning	B2	Spring	SADC				
1.10	Undertake geophysical surveys using volunteers	F4, E3	tbd	SADC				
1.11	Maintain new planting – aftercare, pruning	E4, E9	When required	CMS/FoTW Vols				
1.12	Repair/replace dead hedging to protect plants from trampling and plant up with native species	E3, F2, F3	Oct-Feb	CMS/FoTW Vols				
1.13	Extend and replace fencing around the pond	E10, F2 F3	Oct-Feb	CMS/FoTW Vols				
1.14	Coppice and pollard trees around the pond, including hazel stools to the south west of the pond	E10, F2 F3, E11	Oct-Feb	CMS/FoTW/ Vols				
1.15	Remove laurel coming over fence in north west corner	E1	Oct-Feb	CMS/FoTW/ Vols				
1.16	Remove and treat laurel throughout the woodland	E1	Oct-Feb	CMS/FoTW/ Vols				
1.17	Create clearings in woodland to promote and protect natural regeneration, native planting if required	E3, E5, E11	Oct-Feb	CMS/FoTW/ Vols				

Ref no:	Action	Obj. no:	When	Responsibility	Funding	Estimated Cost	Spec. ref:	Status (completed/ comments)
1.18	Clear and treat laurel and reduce over shading holly in northern corner of site, promote and protect natural regeneration in depression only replant with native species if required	E1, E4	Oct-Feb	CMS/FoTW/Vols				
1.19	Investigate ownership of boundary hedgerows	A4, E9	Ongoing	FoTW/SADC				
1.20	Lift trees around play area to increase light and reduce leaf litter	B2, B3	Oct-Feb	SADC				
1.21	Review Year 1 Action Plan		Mar 18	SADC/CMS/FoTW/Vols				

# The Wick

## Year 1 2017-18

### ANNUAL MANAGEMENT ACTIONS

- Play equipment inspections, repairs and service ☐
- Inspect paths, repair as required ☐
- Independent inspections of play area, carry out any improvements/repairs ☐
- Boundary survey and repair if required ☐
- H&S inspections and works if required ☐
- Grounds maintenance - management of vegetation, empty bins, stain benches etc ☐
- Maintain notice boards and signs ☐
- Level any new benches and provide a surfaced pad next to them to accommodate wheelchair/ pushchairs ☐
- Remove graffiti when required ☐
- Tree management - tree survey, veteran trees, planting schedule, formative pruning ☐
- Support volunteer/community events ☐
- Contribute to The Wick Committee Meetings ☐
- Liaise with other users ☐
- Develop and promote FoTW ☐
- Update the Wicks' webpage when required ☐
- Review and update annual action plans ☐

- Improve Entrance Area
- Relocate litter bin away from sign
- Paint fence and gate
- New signage
- Install notice board

- Install interpretation panel

- Clear and treat laurel, reduce over shading holly

- Promote and protect natural regeneration in the depression
- Replant with native oak and hornbeam if required and it does not lie wet

- Remove laurel coming over fence

- Resurface western path

- Repair bridge

- Repair bridge

- Repair bridge

- Coppice and pollard trees around the pond
- Extend and refence pond

- Resurface entrance to grassland suitable for vehicle access

- Recoppice hazel stools

- Resurface main path suitable for vehicle access

- Relocate benches from beneath large tree canopies

- Resurface pad next to bench and check all the others

- Investigate ownership of boundary hedgerow

- Maintain new planting

- Install interpretation panel

- Maintain new planting

- Maintain new planting
- Protect plants from trampling

- Maintain new planting

- Improve entrance
- Paint fence and gate
- New signage
- Install notice board

- Mend gate to play area
- Install new equipment
- Lift trees around play area

- ONE OFF ITEM
- Change all park litter bins to recycling bins
- Undertake geophysical surveys using volunteers

**Key**  

☐ SADC  
☐ CMS  
☐ Volunteers

Drain cover

Bench

Dog bin

Entrance sign

Vehicle gate

Litter bin

Pedestrian gate

Woodland path

Historic ditch

Depression

Metal fence

Woodland

Scrub

Utilities

Margin

Play area

Bridge

Pond

Amenity cut

Hedge

N

0 15 30 Meters

Countryside Management Service

St Albans City & District Council

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### 5.3 YEAR 2 - 5 ACTION PLAN 2018-22

Ref no:	Action	Obj. no.	When	Responsibility	Funding	Estimated Cost	Spec. ref:	Status (completed/ comments)
2.1	Maintain new planting – aftercare, pruning	E4, E9	When required	CMS/FoTW Vols				
2.2	Promote and protect natural regeneration, replant with native species if required, area by path near Marshal's Drive	E1, E4	Oct-Feb Year 2	CMS/FoTW/ Vols				
2.3	Create clearings in woodland to promote and protect natural regeneration, native planting if required	E3, E5	Oct-Feb Year 3	CMS/FoTW/ Vols				
2.4	Remove flag iris and grasses from pond by hand	E10	Oct-Feb Year 3	CMS/FoTW/ Vols				
2.5	Thin hornbeam to about 30% in the over shaded western corner	E1, E11	Oct-Feb Year 4	CMS/FoTW/ Vols				
2.6	Lift trees around play area to increase light and reduce leaf litter	B2, B3	Oct-Feb Year 4	SADC				
2.7	Review Year 2 Action Plan		Mar 19	SADC/CMS/ FoTW/Vols				
2.8	Review Year 3 Action Plan		Mar 20	SADC/CMS/ FoTW/Vols				
2.9	Review Year 4 Action Plan		Mar 21	SADC/CMS/ FoTW/Vols				
2.10	Review Year 5 Action Plan and consult & write new plan		Mar 22	SADC/CMS/ FoTW/Vols				



# The Wick

## Year 2-5 2018-22

### ANNUAL MANAGEMENT ACTIONS

- Play equipment inspections, repairs and service ☐
- Inspect paths, repair as required ☐
- Independent inspections of play area, carry out any improvements/repairs ☐
- Boundary survey and repair if required ☐
- H&S inspections and works if required ☐
- Grounds maintenance - management of vegetation, empty bins, stain benches etc ☐
- Maintain notice boards and signs ☐
- Level any new benches and provide a surfaced pad next to them to accommodate wheelchair/ pushchairs ☐
- Remove graffiti when required ☐
- Tree management - tree survey, veteran trees, planting schedule, formative pruning ☐
- Support volunteer/community events ☐
- Contribute to The Wick Committee Meetings ☐
- Liaise with other users ☐
- Develop and promote FoTW ☐
- Update the Wicks' webpage when required ☐
- Review and update annual action plans ☐

Year 2  
Promote and replant natural regeneration  
Replant with native species if required, cut in behind bramble so as not to open up area too much

Year 3  
Remove flag iris and grasses from pond by hand

Year 3  
Enlarge clearing by removing 3 silver birch, 3 sycamore and recopping the hazel by path  
Promote and protect natural regeneration  
Plant up with native oak and hornbeam if required, protect with guards and stakes

Year 4  
Thin hornbeam to about 30% in the over shaded western corner

Year 4  
Lift trees around play area

WHEN REQUIRED  
Maintain new planting, aftercare, pruning

Key

SADC

CMS

Volunteers

Drain cover

Notice board

Interpretation panel

Bench

Dog bin

Entrance sign

Vehicle gate

Litter bin

Pedestrian gate

Woodland path

Historic ditch

Depression

Metal fence

Woodland

Scrub

Utilities

Margin

Play area

Bridge

Pond

Amenity cut

Hedge

N

0

15

30

Meters

Countryside Management Service

St Albans City & District Council

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## 6.0 APPENDICES

### 6.1 CONTACTS

Organisation	Role	Contact Details	Phone/email
St Albans City & District Council	Owner	Nick Sherriff	01727 819584 Nick.sherriff@stalbans.gov.uk
John O'Conner Grounds Maintenance	Ground maintenance contractor park ranger	Customer care	01727 844638
Friends of The Wick	Chairman	David Edwards	friendsofthewick@gmail.com

## 6.2 PATH SPECIFICATION

1. The safe, usable width of the finished surfaced area of the main path from Marshal's Drive to Sandpit Lane and into the grassland should be 2.5 metres, suitable for vehicles.
2. Scrape organic debris from existing path. Excavate edges to sound base or 150mm (or 200mm depending on vehicles to be used); whichever is deeper, with all soft spots excavated back to firm ground with the purpose of achieving best surface drainage of the finished route. Spread spoil thinly along the woodland edge and in hollows where available and as directed on site (but not ditches and ponds). Additional spoil may need to be removed from site. Ensure spoil is spread and levelled to form a tidy and even tilth and remove roots, etc. Care should be taken to avoid smothering existing herby vegetation.
3. All care must be taken to avoid damage to underground roots greater than 25mm in diameter throughout the duration of works. Hand dig if necessary.
4. Most of the main path already has a base layer but where no firm base layer already exists lay a non-woven geotextile such as Terram 1500 or similar.
5. Material to be used to be either clean recycled concrete aggregate or virgin aggregate.
6. Supply, spread, grade and thoroughly compact to a dense, tight, even base course recycled aggregate MOT Type 1 or virgin granite 50 mm to dust to a minimum depth of 100mm and provide surface with constant fall.
7. Supply, spread, grade and thoroughly compact to a dense, tight, even surface, a layer of well graded concrete dust fines or virgin stone 18 mm to dust as new wearing course. Finished, compacted depth to be not less than 45 mm. Edges to be lost in adjoining ground and base course to be completely covered. Material must be completely free from deleterious materials.
8. The western path is to be a safe, usable surfaced width of 2m, for pedestrian use following the current desire line, some cutting back may be required with removal of material from site.
9. As 2 but excavate to a minimum depth of 100mm.
10. Supply, spread, grade and thoroughly compact to a dense, tight, even base course of recycled aggregate MOT Type 1, 50 mm to dust to a finished depth of not less than 75mm.
11. Supply, spread, grade and thoroughly compact to a dense, tight, even surface, a layer of well graded concrete dust fines 6 mm to dust as surface dressing. Finished, compacted depth to be not less than 25 mm. Base course to be completely covered.
12. Path to have a final maximum 1:40 (2.5%) cross fall or minimum camber of 1:50 (2%) to allow surface water to drain either side.
13. Material must be completely free from deleterious materials and any protruding objects to be removed by the contractor.

14. Spread, consolidate, level and rake the top-soil which has been stored on site along the edge of the path.
15. Two sleepers to be installed one either side of the western path to create a vehicle crossover. Crossover to be installed near to the play area to allow vehicles to cross the western path and reach the woodland in the south west corner.



## 6.3 TREE PLANTING GUIDELINES

### Species List

Trees that are suitable for planting at The Wick include:

- Oak (*Quercus robur*) – replacement trees for the mature Oaks
- Hornbeam (*Carpinus betulus*) – replacement trees for the mature Hornbeams
- Hawthorn (*Crataegus monogyna*) – as hedgerow plants

All other species should be allowed to grow from natural regeneration of existing trees.

Ideally trees should be from provenance 402 (405 or 406 acceptable), stock needs to be British grown rather than seed sent to Europe to be grown on.

### Suppliers

Suppliers should be asked about their tree health practices and if they have suffered from any tree diseases. Current tree suppliers that have been used and can provide the correct provenance include English Woodlands and British Hardwood Nursery Ltd. When sourcing planting stock check for – plant movement record, audit trail, evidence that tree batch has been pest and disease free during one year of growth in the UK. For UK grown trees look for Woodland Trust 'Grown in Britain' accreditation.

### Where to Plant

New trees are to be planted in clearings that have been created from the removal of non-native sycamores when carrying out tree works in the woodland. Naturally regenerated trees should be left where they are and maintained and protected as below.

### Planting and Establishment

A suitable sized hole should be dug for replacement trees. The hole is to be a few cm smaller than depth of tree's rootball and 3 times wider than the rootball. Place rootball in hole with root crown at soil level and fill the hole with soil creating a firm mound around the base of the tree.

Plants should be staked by using one wooden tree stake and protected with a tree guard to stop grazing animals, trampling or damage from dogs.

The newly planted trees (not natural regeneration) may need watering regularly in the first year to establish the roots system. After the first year trees will only need water, on hot days and during droughts.

Planted trees will require regular maintenance for a period of 3-5 years to ensure they establish well. Maintenance includes: watering, removal of encroaching vegetation, checking stakes and guards, removal of guards when trees are mature, formative pruning to promote good form. Replace with new trees if dead/damaged or diseased.

## **6.4 VETERAN TREE GUIDELINES**

There are a large number of veteran trees, mainly Oak and Hornbeam that can be found in the woodland of The Wick, that need to be managed sensitively for their landscape value and biodiversity. When limbs fall from veteran trees they should remain in situ, as the dead and rotting wood provides a valuable habitat for invertebrates. Where dead limbs are over paths these should be removed but left on the ground near to the tree.

Management operations should take care not to directly or indirectly cause damage to any of these trees. It is recommended that a root exclusion zone is maintained to a minimum of 1.5 times the crown width in order to ensure the trees are not subjected to any root compaction from vehicular movements or storage. This area should help to determine the extent of the conservation margins.

The removal of any epicormic growth from the veteran trees should be continued. Any benches directly below veteran trees should be relocated so that no unnecessary pruning work is carried out.

## 6.5 WILDLIFE SITE CITATION

### Wildlife Site Citation

Site Code: 06/011

Site Name: The Wick, Marshalswick

Grid Reference: TL167083

Area: 3.24 ha

Designation: Wildlife Site, LNR

Habitat	Site interest
Pedunculate oak-hornbeam woodland, Broadleaved, semi-natural, coppice with standards, Amenity grassland, Ditch, Open water: pond	Ancient semi-natural Pedunculate Oak ( <i>Quercus robur</i> )/Hornbeam ( <i>Carpinus betulus</i> ) coppice with standards woodland with much Sycamore ( <i>Acer pseudoplatanus</i> ) and some Ash ( <i>Fraxinus excelsior</i> ), Beech ( <i>Fagus sylvatica</i> ), Hazel ( <i>Corylus avellana</i> ) and Wild Cherry ( <i>Prunus avium</i> ). Hawthorn is the dominant scrub species. The ground flora includes woodland indicators such as Bluebell ( <i>Hyacinthoides non-scripta</i> ), Dog's Mercury ( <i>Mercurialis perennis</i> ), Wood Anemone ( <i>Anemone nemorosa</i> ), Broad Buckler-fern ( <i>Dryopteris dilatata</i> ), Wood Meadow-grass ( <i>Poa nemoralis</i> ) and Pignut ( <i>Conopodium majus</i> ). Bramble ( <i>Rubus fruticosus</i> agg.) and Bracken ( <i>Pteridium aquilinum</i> ) are common. A hedge bank and ditch are present to the eastern boundary and a small pond adds further habitat diversity. Wildlife Site criteria: Ancient woodland with some semi-natural canopy and field evidence suggesting an ancient origin; shown on Bryant (1822); >1ha; woodland indicators.

## 6.6 THE WICK WOOD – SURVEY REPORT

### The Wick Wood – Survey Report 12-04-11

**Site Name:** The Wick Wood, Marshalswick  
**Site Ref.:** 68/011  
**Site size (ha):** 3.24  
**District:** St Albans  
**Grid Ref.:** TL167083  
**Date of survey:** 12.04.11  
**Surveyors:** J Moss, C Lodge, S Mason

**Location/aspect:** East side of St Albans, flat, open.

**Geology/soils:** Clay, overlaid by thick humus (geology map shows Lewes Nodular Chalk Formation and Seaford Chalk Formation (Undifferentiated) – chalk)

**Site Description:** Old Hornbeam coppiced woodland with Oak standards, situated in the middle of a residential area. Some standard Sycamore, Beech, Cherry and Field Maple, with coppiced Hazel. Limited under-storey of mainly Hawthorn with Elder. Much of the ground is dominated by low Bramble and Nettles. 52 plant species recorded with 10 Ancient Woodland Indicators (AWIs), including Holly, Wood Anemone, Bluebell, Dog's Mercury, Ramsons and Wood Sedge. Marsh Marigold and Willow sp. on margin of small, open seasonal pond at north end possibly planted. Other marginal plant sp. unidentified.

A residual bank and ditch with occasional old coppiced/laid Hornbeam along the east side appears of some antiquity and could be the original wood boundary. Other earlier boundaries are lost to development.

**Surrounding land use:** Housing to north & west, children's playgroup and woodland to south, playing field to east.

**Fauna:** Nuthatch, Blackcap, Chiffchaf, Dunnock, Greater Spotted Woodpecker, Blue Tit, Great Tit, Wren, Robin, Blackbird, Magpie & Woodpigeon seen or heard; Brown Rat.

**Current management:** Appears lightly managed. Main footpath and informal circular paths seem well-used by walkers.

JM

24.04.11



**Species List:**

Species		Habitat type**						DAFOR*
English Name	Latin Name	Wood	Fen	Calc	Acid	Neut	Wet	
Maple, Field	<i>Acer campestre</i>	x						R
Sycamore	<i>Acer pseudoplatanus</i>							F
Ground Elder	<i>Aegopodium podagraria</i>							O
Chestnut, Horse	<i>Aesculus hippocastanum</i>							R
Mustard, Garlic	<i>Alliaria petiolata</i>							LF
Garlic, Few-flowered	<i>Allium paradoxum</i>							R
Ramsons	<i>Allium ursinum</i>	x						R
Alder	<i>Alnus glutinosa</i>							R
Anemone, Wood	<i>Anemone nemorosa</i>	x						LA
Parsley, Cow	<i>Anthriscus sylvestris</i>							LA
Burdock, Lesser	<i>Arctium minus</i>							O
Lords-and-Ladies	<i>Arum maculatum</i>							O
Birch, Silver	<i>Betula pendula</i>							O
Marigold, Marsh	<i>Caltha palustris</i>		x				X	R
Sedge, Wood	<i>Carex sylvatica</i>	x						R
Hornbeam	<i>Carpinus betulus</i>	x						O
Hazel	<i>Corylus avellana</i>	x						O
Hawthorn	<i>Crataegus monogyna</i>							O
Beech	<i>Fagus sylvatica</i>							R
Ash	<i>Fraxinus excelsior</i>							F
Cleavers	<i>Galium aparine</i>							O
Wood Avens	<i>Geum urbanum</i>							O
Ground Ivy	<i>Glechoma hederacea</i>							R
Ivy	<i>Hedera helix</i>							F
Hogweed	<i>Heracleum sphondylium</i>							O
Bluebell	<i>Hyacinthoides non-scripta</i>	x						A
Holly	<i>Ilex aquifolium</i>	x						O
Dog's Mercury	<i>Mercurialis perennis</i>	x						O
Daffodil, Cultivated	<i>Narcissus</i>							R
Plantain, Greater	<i>Plantago major</i>							R
Meadow-grass, Annual	<i>Poa annua</i>							R
Cherry, Wild	<i>Prunus avium</i>	x						O
* Laurel, Portugal	* <i>Prunus lusitanica</i>							R
Blackthorn	<i>Prunus spinosa</i>							R
Bracken	<i>Pteridium aquilinum</i>							R
Oak, Pedunculate	<i>Quercus robur</i>							F
Celandine, Lesser	<i>Ranunculus ficaria</i>							LA
Rhododendron	<i>Rhododendron ponticum</i>							R
Currant, Red	<i>Ribes rubrum</i>							R
Rose, Dog	<i>Rosa canina</i> agg							R
Bramble	<i>Rubus fruticosus</i> agg.							A
Raspberry	<i>Rubus idaeus</i>							R
Dock, Broad-leaved	<i>Rumex obtusifolius</i>							LF
Dock, Wood	<i>Rumex sanguineus</i>							F
Willow, sp	<i>Salix</i> sp							R
Elder	<i>Sambucus nigra</i>							O
Rowan / Mountain Ash	<i>Sorbus aucuparia</i>							R
Woundwort, Hedge	<i>Stachys sylvatica</i>							R
Dandelion family	<i>Taraxacum officinale</i> agg.							R
Yew	<i>Taxus baccata</i>							R
Nettle, Stinging	<i>Urtica dioica</i>							F
Violet, Sweet	<i>Viola odorata</i>							R
<b>Total no of indicators</b>		<b>10</b>	<b>1</b>				<b>1</b>	
<b>Species threshold***</b>		10	5	8	5	8	5	
<b>Minimum Size of Site****</b>		1	0.3	0.25	0.25	0.25	0.25	
<b>Total number of species:</b>		<b>52</b>						

\* planted/non-native.

\*The **DAFOR** Scale – indicates the frequency of occurrence of each species found.

D	Dominant
A	Abundant
F	Frequent
O	Occasional
R	Rare
L	Locally

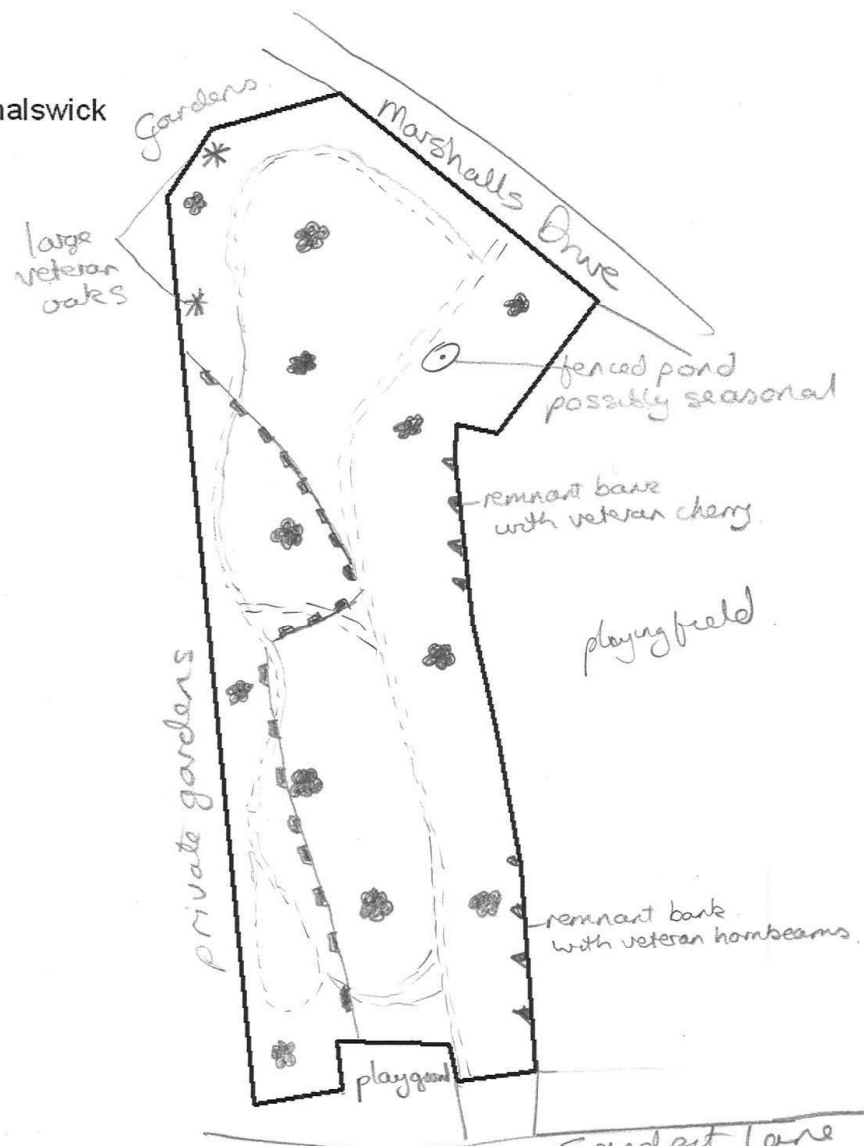
\*\* Habitats are divided into 6 types: Ancient woodland, fen and swamp, calcareous grassland, acid grassland, neutral grassland and wet grassland.

\*\*\* Species threshold shows how many indicator species are needed per habitat type for a site to meet Wildlife Site criteria.

\*\*\*\* Minimum size of site shows how large a site needs to be in hectares (for each habitat type) to meet Wildlife Site criteria.



Wildlife Site  
Ref. 68/011 The Wick, Marshalswick



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100019606,2011

0 15 30 60 90 120 150 180 210 240 270 300 Meters

Sandpit Lane

## 6.7 SPECIES LIST

Species that have been recorded on site, records from Herts Environmental Records Centre. Unconfirmed records marked with \*. Records marked with x recorded in local area.

Common Name	Scientific Name
<b>Flowering Plants</b>	
Annual Meadow-grass	<i>Poa annua</i>
Bluebell	<i>Hyacinthoides non-scripta</i>
Bramble	<i>Rubus fruticosus</i> agg.
Broad-leaved Dock	<i>Rumex obtusifolius</i>
Butcher's Broom *	<i>Ruscus aculeatus</i>
Cleavers	<i>Galium aparine</i>
Common Nettle	<i>Urtica dioica</i>
Cow Parsley	<i>Anthriscus sylvestris</i>
daffodils	<i>Narcissus</i>
Dandelion	<i>Taraxacum officinale</i> agg.
Dog Rose	<i>Rosa canina</i> agg.
Dog's Mercury	<i>Mercurialis perennis</i>
Few-flowered Garlic	<i>Allium paradoxum</i>
Garlic Mustard	<i>Alliaria petiolata</i>
Greater Plantain	<i>Plantago major</i>
Ground-elder	<i>Aegopodium podagraria</i>
Ground-ivy	<i>Glechoma hederacea</i>
Hedge Woundwort	<i>Stachys sylvatica</i>
Hogweed	<i>Heracleum sphondylium</i>
Ivy	<i>Hedera helix</i>
Lesser Burdock	<i>Arctium minus</i>
Lesser Celandine	<i>Ranunculus ficaria</i>
Lords-and-Ladies	<i>Arum maculatum</i>
Marsh-marigold	<i>Caltha palustris</i>
Ramsons	<i>Allium ursinum</i>
Raspberry	<i>Rubus idaeus</i>
Red Currant	<i>Ribes rubrum</i>
Snowdrop *	
Sweet Violet	<i>Viola odorata</i>
Yellow Iris	<i>Iris pseudacorus</i>
Wood Anemone	<i>Anemone nemorosa</i>
Wood Avens	<i>Geum urbanum</i>
Wood Dock	<i>Rumex sanguineus</i>
Wood-sedge	<i>Carex sylvatica</i>
<b>Trees</b>	
Alder	<i>Alnus glutinosa</i>
Ash	<i>Fraxinus excelsior</i>
Beech	<i>Fagus sylvatica</i>
Blackthorn	<i>Prunus spinosa</i>
Cherry *	<i>Prunus avium</i>
Elder	<i>Sambucus nigra</i>
Field Maple	<i>Acer campestre</i>
Hawthorn	<i>Crataegus monogyna</i>
Hazel	<i>Corylus avellana</i>



Holly	<i>Ilex aquifolium</i>
Hornbeam	<i>Carpinus betulus</i>
Horse-chestnut	<i>Aesculus hippocastanum</i>
Pedunculate Oak	<i>Quercus robur</i>
Portugal Laurel	<i>Prunus lusitanica</i>
Rhododendron ponticum	<i>Rhododendron ponticum</i>
Rowan	<i>Sorbus aucuparia</i>
Silver Birch	<i>Betula pendula</i>
Sycamore	<i>Acer pseudoplatanus</i>
Wild Cherry	<i>Prunus avium</i>
Willow	<i>Salix</i>
Yew	<i>Taxus baccata</i>
<b>Fern</b>	
Bracken	<i>Pteridium aquilinum</i>
<b>Moss</b>	
Cape Thread-moss	<i>Orthodontium lineare</i>
Common Feather-moss	<i>Eurhynchium praelongum</i>
Common Pincushion	<i>Dicranoweisia cirrata</i>
Elegant Silk-moss	<i>Pseudotaxiphyllum elegans</i>
Supine Plait-moss	<i>Hypnum cupressiforme</i> var. <i>resupinatum</i>
Swan's-neck Thyme-moss	<i>Mnium hornum</i>
<b>Liverwort</b>	
Variable-leaved Crestwort	<i>Lophocolea heterophylla</i>
<b>Birds</b>	
Blackbird	<i>Turdus merula</i>
Blackcap	<i>Sylvia atricapilla</i>
Blue Tit	<i>Cyanistes caeruleus</i>
Carrion Crow *	<i>Corvus corone corone</i>
Chaffinch	<i>Fringilla coelebs</i>
Chiffchaff	<i>Phylloscopus collybita</i>
Collared Dove *	<i>Streptopelia decaocto</i>
Dunnock	<i>Prunella modularis</i>
Fieldfare *	<i>Turdus pilaris</i>
Greenfinch	<i>Carduelis chloris</i>
Great Spotted Woodpecker	<i>Dendrocopos major</i>
Great Tit	<i>Parus major</i>
Green Woodpecker *	<i>Picus viridis</i>
Grey Heron *	<i>Ardea cinerea</i>
House Sparrow *	<i>Passer domesticus</i>
Jackdaw*	<i>Corvus monedula</i>
Jay *	<i>Garrulus glandarius</i>
Long-tailed Tit	<i>Aegithalos caudatus</i>
Magpie	<i>Pica pica</i>
Mistle Thrush *	<i>Turdus viscivorus</i>
Nuthatch	<i>Sitta europaea</i>
Pied Wagtail *	<i>Motacilla alba yarrellii</i>
Redwing *	<i>Turdus iliacus</i>
Robin	<i>Erithacus rubecula</i>
Song Thrush *	<i>Turdus philomelos</i>

Sparrowhawk *	<i>Accipiter nisus</i>
Starling *	<i>Sturnus vulgaris</i>
Treecreeper *	<i>Certhia familiaris</i>
Tawny Owl *	<i>Strix aluco</i>
Woodpigeon	<i>Columba palumbus</i>
Wren	<i>Troglodytes troglodytes</i>
<b>Terrestrial Mammal</b>	
Brown Rat	<i>Rattus norvegicus</i>
Bank Vole x	<i>Myodes glareolus</i>
Common Pipistrelle Bat x	<i>Pipistrellus pipistrellus</i>
Common Shrew x	<i>Sorex araneus</i>
Fox x	<i>Vulpes vulpes</i>
Grey Squirrel	<i>Sciurus carolinensis</i>
Hedgehog x	<i>Erinaceus europaeus</i>
Rabbit x	<i>Oryctolagus cuniculus</i>
<b>Amphibian</b>	
Common Frog	<i>Rana temporaria</i>
<b>Insect -Moth</b>	
Ash Bud Moth	<i>Prays fraxinella</i>
Barred Fruit-tree Tortrix	<i>Pandemis cerasana</i>
Birch Conch	<i>Cochylis nana</i>
Bordered Carl	<i>Coptotriche marginea</i>
Brimstone Moth	<i>Opisthagraptis luteolata</i>
Broken-barred Carpet	<i>Electrophaes corylata</i>
Buff Ermine	<i>Spilosoma lutea</i>
Burnished Brass	<i>Diachrysia chrysitis</i>
Clouded Silver	<i>Lomographa temerata</i>
Common Carpet	<i>Epirrhoe alternata</i>
Common Marbled Carpet	<i>Chloroclysta truncata</i>
Common Nettle-tap	<i>Anthophila fabriciana</i>
Common Pug	<i>Eupithecia vulgata</i>
Common Swift	<i>Korscheltellus lupulina</i>
Dark-barred Twist	<i>Syndemis musculana</i>
Diamond-back Moth	<i>Plutella xylostella</i>
Ephestia parasitella subsp. unicolorella	<i>Ephestia parasitella subsp. unicolorella</i>
Figure of Eighty	<i>Tethea ocularis subsp. octogesimea</i>
Flame Carpet	<i>Xanthorhoe designata</i>
Flame Shoulder	<i>Ochroleura plecta</i>
Fulvous Clothes	<i>Tinea semifulvella</i>
Golden Pigmy	<i>Stigmella aurella</i>
Green Oak Tortrix	<i>Tortrix viridana</i>
Heart & Dart	<i>Agrotis exclamationis</i>
Hook-streak Grass-veneer	<i>Crambus lathoniellus</i>
Ingrailed Clay	<i>Diarsia mendica</i>
Large Brindled Clothes	<i>Triaxomera parasitella</i>
Light Brown Apple Moth	<i>Epiphyas postvittana</i>
Lime Hawk-moth	<i>Mimas tiliae</i>
Lime-speck Pug	<i>Eupithecia centaureata</i>
Maiden's Blush	<i>Cyclophora punctaria</i>
Marbled White Spot	<i>Deltote pygarga</i>

Middle-barred Minor	<i>Oligia fasciuncula</i>
Olive Pearl	<i>Udea olivialis</i>
Pale Mottled Willow	<i>Caradrina clavipalpis</i>
Plum Tortrix	<i>Hedya pruniana</i>
Purple Argent	<i>Argyresthia albistria</i>
Red Roller	<i>Ancylis mitterbacheriana</i>
Shears	<i>Hada plebeja</i>
Small Fan-foot	<i>Herminia grisealis</i>
Small Magpie	<i>Anania hortulata</i>
Straw Dot	<i>Rivula sericealis</i>
Sycamore-seed Pigmy	<i>Ectoedemia decentella</i>
Tawny Marbled Minor	<i>Oligia latruncula</i>
Treble Brown Spot	<i>Idaea trigeminata</i>
Triple-barred Argent	<i>Argyresthia trifasciata</i>
Virgin Smoke	<i>Luffia ferchaultella</i>
Wax Moth	<i>Galleria mellonella</i>
White Oak Midget	<i>Phyllonorycter harrisella</i>
White-banded Pigmy	<i>Ectoedemia albifasciella</i>
White-shouldered House-moth	<i>Endrosis sarcitrella</i>
Yellow-backed Clothes	<i>Monopis obviella</i>
Yellow-barred Long-horn	<i>Nemophora degeerella</i>
Yellow-faced Bell	<i>Notocelia cynosbatella</i>
Yellow-triangle Slender	<i>Caloptilia alchimiella</i>

## OLD RECORDS

The Wick species list – from HBRC Survey 1984 & 1988 survey.

### Common Name

### Scientific Name

#### VASCULAR PLANTS

Broad Buckler fern	<i>Dryopteris dilatata</i>
Lady's Fern	<i>Dryop filix-femina</i>
Yarrow*	<i>Achillea millefolium</i>
Greater Burdock	<i>Arctium lappa</i>
Downy Birch	<i>Betula pubescens</i>
False Brome	<i>Brachypodium sylvaticum</i>
Hairy Brome	<i>Bromus ramosus</i>
Buddleia*	<i>Buddleia spp.</i>
Sweet Chestnut*	<i>Castanea sativa</i>
Black Knapweed	<i>Centaurea nigra</i>
Rosebay Willowherb	<i>Chamaenerion angustifolium</i>
Enchanter's-nightshade	<i>Circaea lutetiana</i>
Pignut	<i>Conopodium majus</i>
Cypress spp. *	<i>Cupressus</i>
Cock's-foot	<i>Dactylis glomerata</i>
Wild Carrot*	<i>Daucus carota</i>
Foxglove*	<i>Digitalis purpurea</i>
Broad-leaved Willowherb	<i>Epilobium montanum</i>
Giant Fescue	<i>Festuca gigantea</i>
Snowdrop*	<i>Galanthus nivalis</i>
Long-stalked Crane's-bill	<i>Geranium columbinum</i>
Herb-Robert	<i>Geranium robertianum</i>
Floating Sweet-grass	<i>Glycerica fluitans</i>
Yorkshire Fog	<i>Holcus lanatus</i>

Wall Barley  
 Common Cat's-ear  
 White Dead-nettle  
 Larch\*  
 Common Duckweed  
 Ox-eye Daisy  
 Honeysuckle  
 Ragged Robin\*  
 Hairy Woodrush  
 Wood Melick  
 White Melilot  
 Water Mint  
 Three-nerved Sandwort  
 Field Forget-me-not  
 Timothy  
 Wood Meadow-grass  
 Smooth Meadow-grass  
 Rough Meadow-grass  
 Knotgrass spp.  
 Knotgrass  
 Cowslip\*  
 Turkey Oak\*  
 Creeping Buttercup  
 Meadow Buttercup\*  
 Rhododendron  
 Common Sorrel  
 Curled Dock  
 White Willow  
 Sedum\*  
 Hedge Mustard  
 Bittersweet  
 Rowan  
 Hedge Woundwort  
 Common Chickweed  
 English Elm\*  
 Common Dog-violet\*

#### **MAMMALS**

Long-Eared Bat\*  
 Muntjak Deer \*

#### **AMPHIBIANS**

Smooth Newt\*

*Hordeum murinum*  
*Hypochoeris radicata*  
*Lamium album*  
*Larix decidua*  
*Lemna minor*  
*Leucanthemum vulgare*  
*Lonicera periclymenum*  
*Lychnis flos-cuculi*  
*Luzula pilosa*  
*Melic uniflora*  
*Melilotus alba*  
*Mentha aquatica*  
*Moehringia trinervia*  
*Myosotis arvensis*  
*Phleum pratense*  
*Poa nemoralis*  
*Poa pratensis*  
*Poa trivialis*  
*Polygonaceae are*  
*Polygonacea aviculare*  
*Primula veris*  
*Quercus cerris*  
*Ranunculus repens*  
*Ranunculus acris*  
*Rhododendron ponticum*  
*Rumex acetosa*  
*Rumex crispus*  
*Salix alba*  
*Sedum spectabile*  
*Sisymbrium officinale*  
*Solanum dulcamara*  
*Sorbus aucuparia*  
*Stachys sylvatica*  
*Stellara media*  
*Ulmus procera*  
*Violaceae riviniana*

*Plecotus auritus*  
*Muntiacus reevesi*

*Triturus vulgaris*

## 6.8 FRIENDS OF THE WICK – THE WICK LNR LEAFLET

### Species of Trees

The woodland comprises approximately 1000 trees, with an astonishing variety of species.

About a quarter of the population is OAK, including many splendid mature and veteran specimens. The North end of the wood includes ASH in some quantity, and the South end HORNBEAM. All are of good quality. SYCAMORE can be found throughout, with many fine trees.

HAWTHORN is ubiquitous, although some are poor and thin. CHERRY and HAZEL are scattered throughout. The SILVER BIRCHES are in decline. There is a strong and diverse representation of small trees and saplings (the 'understory') including those mentioned above as well as HOLLY, ROWAN, YEW and ELDER; which all suggest vigorous natural regeneration.

### Birdlife

The 'Friends' have adopted the Green Woodpecker as a logo, the sound of woodpeckers is heard regularly throughout Spring in The Wick. Some thirty bird species are present in The Wick including: SONG THRUSH, HOUSE SPARROW, DUNNOCK, CHAFFINCH, TREECREEPER, TAWNY OWL, and PIED WAGTAIL. FIELDFARE and REDWING migrants are seen and a HERON is an occasional visitor to the pond.

### Plantlife

In the Spring, The Wick is carpeted by BLUEBELLS although some are the non-native Spanish variety. Also present are: SNOWDROPS, COW PARSLEY SLOE, BUTCHER'S BROOM, WOOD ANEMONE and many other species. Recently, The 'Friends' have been planting additional wild flower varieties around the periphery of the playing field.

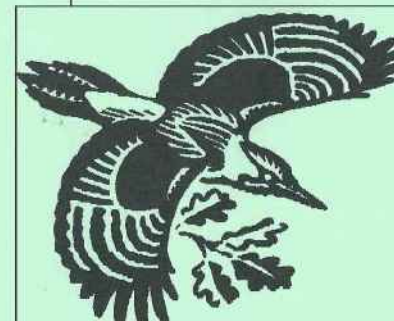


### Directions

The Wick is accessed by two entrances – one in Sandpit Lane, the other in Marshal's Drive. There is adequate parking in Marshal's Drive. Only the central path is suitable for pushchairs and disabled visitors. Cycling is not encouraged anywhere in The Wick.

**Friends of The Wick**

### Friends of The Wick



**The Wick  
Local Nature Reserve  
and  
Open Space**

**Marshal's Drive,  
St. Albans**

An association of local volunteers who wish to maintain and conserve The Wick ancient woodland and recreational open space.



## Friends of The Wick

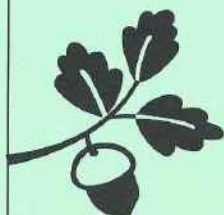
### The Wick

The Wick Local Nature Reserve is a 3.3 hectare area of deciduous woodland and a recreational field located in the Marshalswick residential area of St. Albans, between Sandpit Lane and Marshal's Drive. The Wick was given to the community in 1929 by the then owner of the land with the instruction 'to keep the land in its wild state, as nature made it.'

The woodland is ancient semi-natural woodland which means that there has been woodland on the site for at least 400 years. There is a small pond, which tends to dry up in the Summer, and a bank and ditch system of archaeological significance.

The Wick is a haven for wildlife and has therefore been designated a County Wildlife Site. There is unrestricted public access. The wooded area is criss-crossed by paths and provides a place for quiet relaxation. The open area is popular for ball games and there is also a small fenced play park for small children which provides swings and a slide. The Wick offers a secure area for exercising dogs.

The Wick – historical meaning 'dwelling place' – was originally part of the park of Marshalswick House, a large and impressive house, which was demolished in 1927.



### The Friends of the Wick

The Wick is managed by the Countryside Management Service (CMS) in partnership with St. Albans District Council. The 'Friends of the Wick' was established so that the local community could participate in the management and care of The Wick.

'Friends' keep an eye on The Wick on a day to day basis, keep The Wick tidy and report any problems such as vandalism. In addition a 'workday' is held three or four times a year. Tasks performed include distributing wood chippings over muddy areas on minor paths, clearing out the pond, planting and pruning and cutting back unwanted species, such as laurel.

A quarterly meeting is held at which Friends can discuss the care of The Wick with representatives from CMS and St. Albans District Council. These meetings cover a wide range of subjects including grass cutting, cycling, provision of seating, path maintenance, fly tipping and finance.

The only requirement for joining 'The Friends' is that you should be interested in The Wick and share a desire to maintain it as a nature reserve and attractive amenity for local residents. Currently there are about seventy 'Friends'. There is no subscription and you will simply receive a copy of the quarterly meeting 'Minutes' which will tell you about all the issues currently under discussion and provide dates and details of future Wick 'Workdays' and 'Friends' meetings.

*If you wish to become a 'Friend' please provide postal details (and email address, if available) to:*

*Friends of the Wick,  
Countryside Management Service,  
Hixberry Lane,  
St. Albans AL4 0TZ*



### Woodland Management

Woodland needs to be managed intelligently and sensitively and cutting timber may be essential for the long term health of the woodland.

A fallen tree opens up the canopy, allows light to filter through, and encourages wild flowers to grow and the regeneration of young trees.

Trees should be left where they fall, not only does this maintain a natural appearance but the rotting timber provides a rich source of food for insect life, mosses and lichens.

Some timber has to be felled deliberately, because a tree is unsafe, diseased, or an invasive species, or merely to open up the canopy. Laurels can be regarded as an invasive species. They spread throughout the woodland and reduce biodiversity (fewer different species) and the intense shade underneath discourages ground flora. The laurels have been largely removed from The Wick (but are now beginning to regenerate).

Wild flowers thrive best in soil which has a low level of nutrient. Fly tipping of grass cuttings and other garden waste looks unsightly, raises the nutrient level and discourages the growth of native wild flowers.

Around the playing field, a 'buffer zone' of longer grass is being established to give a more natural transition between the mown grass and the adjacent woodland and to encourage wild flowers. The buffer zone also provides a safe route for small animals to move around whilst being hidden from predators by the long grass.

The main path through the Wick has been restored with 'scalpings' from road repairs. This provides a hard wearing surface that is free from mud in Winter but looks natural all the year round. It is accepted the minor paths will get muddy to some extent in Winter (welly boots required!) but the Friends maintain these paths in acceptable condition by distributing a layer of bark chippings

## 7. ADDITIONAL APPENDIX – ACTION PLANS AND MAPS 2022-27

### 7.1 Annual and regular actions

Abbreviations: SADC – St Albans City and District Council; CMS – Countryside Management Service; FoTW – Friends of The Wick; Vols – Volunteers; JOC – John O’Conner Grounds Maintenance; GM – Grounds maintenance.

Ref no.	Action	Obj. Ref	When	Lead	Delivery	Funding	Est. Cost	Spec. Ref.	Status
0.1	Health & Safety inspection; undertake works as required	B1	When required	SADC	JOC	GM budget			
0.2	Condition survey of The Wick’s boundary and internal fences/gates; undertake repairs as required	B2	Every 6 months	SADC	JOC	GM budget			
0.3	General site inspection	B2	Daily	FoTW/CMS	FoTW				
0.4	Inspect all paths and undertake repairs as required	B2	Every 6 months	SADC	JOC	GM budget			
0.5	Fill holes in field	B2	When required	FoTW/CMS	FoTW				
0.6	Removal of temporary structures	B2	When required	FoTW/CMS	FoTW				
0.7	Litter picking	B2	Weekly	FoTW/CMS	FoTW				
0.8	Remove all graffiti in accordance with the District Council’s graffiti policy	B2	When required	SADC	JOC	GM budget			
0.9	Complete biannual tree safety survey and undertake emergency tree work	B2	Apr & Oct	SADC	SADC	Tree budget			
0.10	Cut back vegetation along paths and pavements	B2	When required	FoTW/CMS	FoTW				
0.11	Play area inspection and undertake any repairs as required	B3	Weekly	SADC	JOC	GM budget			

Ref no.	Action	Obj. Ref	When	Lead	Delivery	Funding	Est. Cost	Spec. Ref.	Status
0.12	Play area service	B3	Every 6 months	SADC	JOC	GM budget			
0.13	Commission an independent inspection of play area and carry out identified improvements/repairs	B3	Annually	SADC	SADC	GM budget			
0.14	Top up mulch in play area	B3	Annual	SADC	JOC	GM budget			
0.15	Empty litter bins on a weekly basis	C1	All year	SADC	JOC	GM budget			
0.16	Management of vegetation through the Grounds Maintenance Contract	C1	Apr – Oct	SADC	JOC	GM budget			
0.17	Inspect all benches, and if required, stain and refurbish (some are plastic)	C2	Annual	SADC	JOC	GM budget			
0.18	Block minor paths to protect plants from trampling	E3	When required	FoTW/CMS	FoTW				
0.19	Maintain dead hedging to protect plants from trampling in the wild area	E3	When required	FoTW/CMS	FoTW				
0.20	Maintain path edging with brash to minimise trampling	E3	When required	FoTW/CMS	FoTW				
0.21	In compacted areas which have been protected from trampling, disturb soil to encourage natural regeneration	E3	When required	FoTW/CMS	FoTW				
0.22	Control bramble encroachment in small areas to benefit bluebell and wood anemone	E4	Apr-Oct	FoTW/CMS	FoTW				
0.23	Remove invasive non-native species	E6	When required	FoTW/CMS	FoTW				
0.24	Maintain bird and bat boxes	E	When required	FoTW/CMS	FoTW				

Ref no.	Action	Obj. Ref	When	Lead	Delivery	Funding	Est. Cost	Spec. Ref.	Status
0.25	Friends of The Wick led volunteer/community events and walks at The Wick	F1	Ongoing	FoTW/CMS	FoTW	Staff time			
0.26	Contribute to Friends of The Wick Committee Meetings	F3	Twice a year	FoTW	SADC/CMS/FoTW	Staff time			
0.27	Develop and promote Friends of The Wick	F3	Ongoing	CMS/FoTW	SADC/CMS/FoTW	Staff time			
0.28	Update Friends of The Wick website when required	G2	When required	FoTW	FoTW				
0.29	Review and update annual action plans		Spring	CMS	SADC/CMS/FoTW	Staff time			

## 7.2 Year 1 Actions 2022-23

Ref no.	Action	Obj. Ref	When	Lead	Delivery	Funding	Est. Cost	Spec. Ref.	Status
1.1	Add sleeper to southern bridge on western path to improve accessibility	A3	Aug	CMS	FoTW/vols	SADC	£100		
1.2	Replace northern bridge on western path	A3	Aug	CMS	FoTW/vols	SADC	£500		
1.3	Replace sleeper on bridge next to playground	A3	Aug	CMS	FoTW/vols	SADC	£100		
1.4	Install weld mesh on all bridges to improve grip	A3	Aug	CMS	FoTW/vols	SADC	£200		
1.5	Surface two paths from main path into grassland at southern end (approx. 50m total)	A3	Aug	CMS	Contractor	External	£5000		
1.6	Resurface main path to existing width from Sandpit Lane to play area (approx. 100m)	A3	Aug	CMS	Contractor	External			
1.7	Add litter bin next to bench on east side of field	C1	Aug	SADC	JOC	GM budget			
1.8	Relocate benches and bins from edge of woodland	C2	Aug	SADC	JOC	GM budget			
1.9	Install new bench on north side of field	C2	Aug	SADC	JOC	GM budget			
1.10	Replace damaged bench on western path	C2	Aug	SADC	JOC	GM budget			
1.11	Cease mowing along boundary to woodland to allow succession to scrub and create woodland edge habitat	E1	Apr	SADC	JOC	GM budget			
1.12	Cease mowing to allow reestablishment of bramble bank	E1	Apr	SADC	JOC	GM budget			
1.13	Clear laurel, including laurel regeneration around remaining laurel on western boundary	E1	Oct-Feb	CMS	FoTW				



1.14	Treat laurel stumps	E1	Oct-Feb	CMS	Contractor	SADC	£500		
1.15	Close approach paths to benches from woodland	E3	Aug	FoTW	FoTW				
1.16	Native tree planting in glade established in 2019	E4	Nov	CMS	FoTW	External	£200		
1.17	Control sycamore regeneration in glade established in 2019	E5	Oct	CMS	FoTW/vols				
1.18	Extend meadow areas	E8	Apr	SADC	JOC	GM budget			
1.19	Re-seed all meadow areas with native wildflowers and grasses	E8	Sep	CMS	Contractor	External	£2000		
1.20	Plant spring flowering bulbs to mark meadow areas on all sides	E8	Oct	CMS	FoTW/vols	External	£500		
1.21	Plant standard oak trees within meadow areas	E8	Feb	CMS/SADC	FoTW/vols	External	£200		
1.22	Plant native hedgerows to fill gaps in front of boundary fences	E9	Feb	CMS	FoTW/vols	External	£500		

### 7.3 Year 2-5 Actions 2023-27

Ref no.	Action	Obj. Ref	When	Lead	Delivery	Funding	Est. Cost	Spec. Ref.	Status
2.1	Carry out improvements to all entrances into The Wick – new signage on gate, paint railings, fix gates	A1	Year 2, summer	CMS	Vols/ contractor	External	£1000		
2.2	Install notice boards	A2	Year 2, summer	CMS	Contractor	External	£7000		
2.3	Design and install new interpretation panels	A2	Year 2, summer	CMS	Contractor	External			
2.4	Lift trees around play area to increase light and reduce leaf litter	B3	Year 2, Oct-Feb	CMS	Contractor	External	£5000		
2.5	Limited extension to small glade north-west of play area by felling a small number of trees around it, encouraging regeneration	E1	Year 2, Oct-Feb	CMS	Contractor	External			
2.6	Light thinning close to glade established in 2019 including three non-native red oaks	E1	Year 2, Oct-Feb	CMS	Contractor	External			
2.7	Thin hornbeam by about 30% in the over shaded western corner	E1	Year 2, Oct-Feb	CMS	Contractor	External			
2.8	Native tree planting within small glade north-west of play area	E4	Year 2, Feb	CMS	FoTW/vols	External	£200		
2.9	Aftercare for new planting	E4	Year 2-5, when required	CMS	FoTW				
2.10	Clear flag iris (approximately two thirds) and non-native marigold from pond to maintain area of open water	E10	Year 3	CMS	FoTW				

# Task Responsibility

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

- Health & Safety inspection; undertake works as required □
- Condition survey of boundary and internal fences/gates; repairs as required □
- General site inspection □
- Inspect paths; repairs as required □
- Removal of temporary structures □
- Litter picking □
- Removal of graffiti □
- Biannual tree safety survey; emergency tree works □
- Cut back vegetation along paths and pavements □
- Empty litter bins □
- Inspect and maintain benches □
- Block minor paths to protect plants from trampling □
- Maintain dead hedging to protect plants from trampling □
- Maintain path edging with brash to minimise trampling □
- In compacted areas, disturb soil to encourage natural regeneration □
- Control bramble encroachment in small areas to benefit bluebell and wood anemone □
- Remove invasive non-native species □
- Maintain bird and bat boxes □

## The Wick

### Greenspace Action Plan 2022-27

#### Annual and regular actions

## Legend

- Bench
- Drain cover
- ▲ Entrance sign
- Litter bin
- Pedestrian gate
- Vehicle gate
- Woodland path
- Ditch
- Depression within woodland
- Metal fence
- Woodland
- Scrub
- Utilities
- Conservation cut grass
- Play area
- Bridge
- Pond
- Amenity cut grass
- Hedge

Fill holes in field □

Top up mulch in play area □

Play area weekly inspection; repairs as required □

Play area six monthly service □

Play area annual inspection; repairs as required □

Management of vegetation through Grounds Maintenance contract □

- Friends of the Wick led volunteer/ community events and walks □
- Friends of The Wick Committee meetings □
- Develop and promote Friends of the Wick □
- Update Friends of The Wick webpage when required □
- Review and update annual action plans □

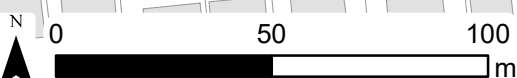
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December 2021

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101m

### Task Responsibility

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

- Install weld mesh on all bridges to improve grip □
- Plant native hedgerow plants to fill gaps in front of boundary fences □

Clear laurel regeneration □

Treat laurel stumps □

Replace bridge □

Add sleeper to bridge to improve accessibility □

Native tree planting □

Cease mowing along boundary to woodland to allow succession to scrub and create woodland edge habitat □

Replace damaged bench □

Replace sleeper on bridge □

Resurface main path from Sandpit Lane to play area □

Cease mowing to allow reestablishment of bramble bank □

Install new bench □

Move benches away from edge of existing woodland □

Close approach paths to benches from woodland □

Plant standard oak trees within meadow areas □

Add litter bin next to bench □

Re-seed meadow areas with native wildflowers and grasses □

Extend meadow areas □

Plant spring flowering bulbs to mark meadow areas □

Clear laurel □

Treat laurel stumps □

Surface two paths into grassland from main path (approx. 50m) □

## The Wick

Greenspace Action Plan 2022-27

Year 1 actions 2022-23

### Legend

- Bench
- Drain cover
- ▲ Entrance sign
- Litter bin
- Pedestrian gate
- Vehicle gate
- Woodland path
- Ditch
- Depression within woodland
- Metal fence
- Woodland
- Scrub
- Utilities
- Conservation cut grass
- Play area
- Bridge
- Pond
- Amenity cut grass
- Hedge

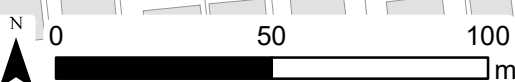
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# Task Responsibility

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

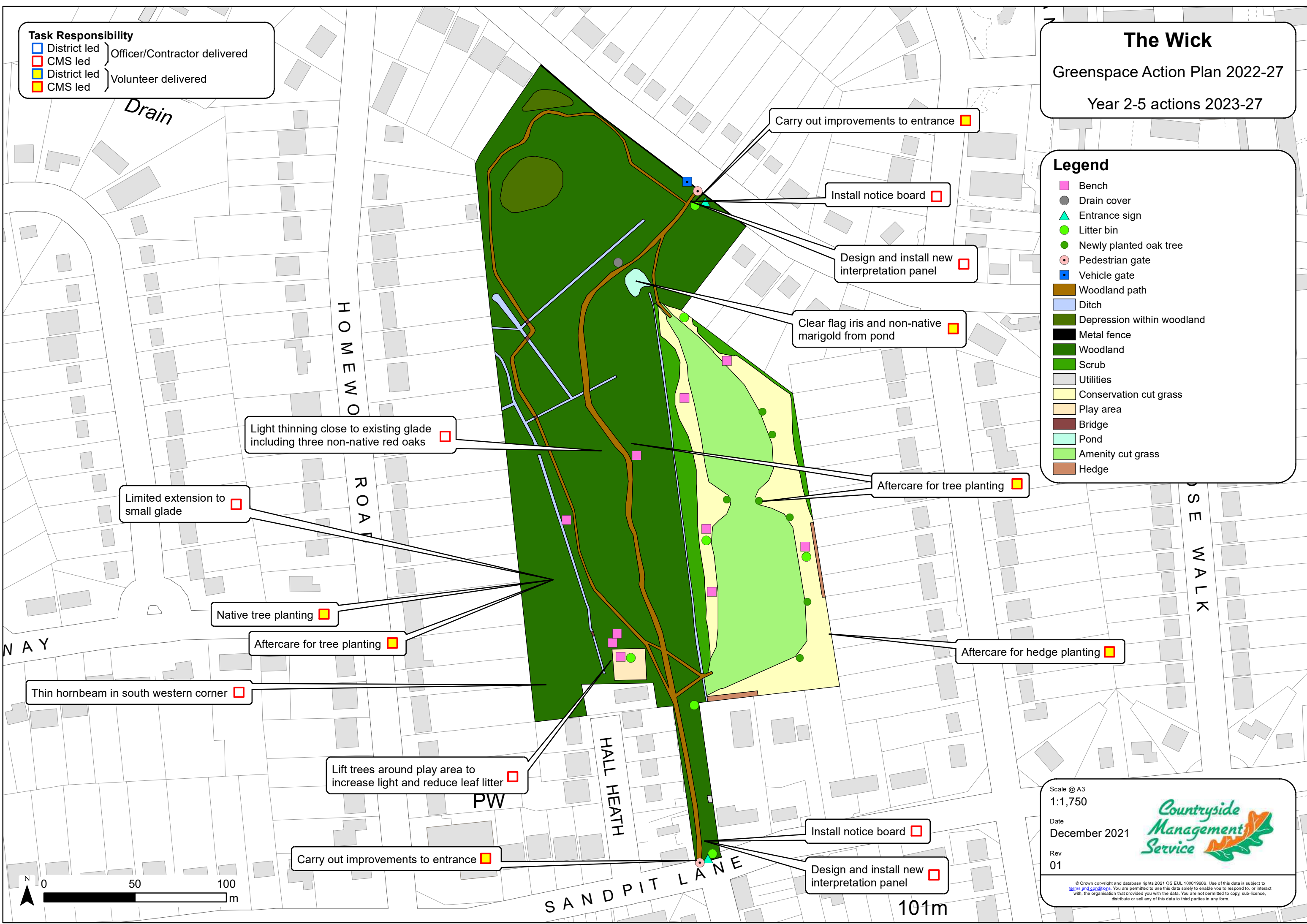
# The Wick

Greenspace Action Plan 2022-27

Year 2-5 actions 2023-27

# Legend

- Bench
- Drain cover
- ▲ Entrance sign
- Litter bin
- Newly planted oak tree
- Pedestrian gate
- Vehicle gate
- Woodland path
- Ditch
- Depression within woodland
- Metal fence
- Woodland
- Scrub
- Utilities
- Conservation cut grass
- Play area
- Bridge
- Pond
- Amenity cut grass
- Hedge



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