

**Rothamsted Park**

**Greenspace Action Plan**

**2017 - 2022**



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## 1. SITE SUMMARY

<b>Name</b>	Rothamsted Park
<b>Address</b>	Leyton Road, Harpenden, Herts, AL5 2HU.
<b>Grid ref</b>	TL130138
<b>Size</b>	23.7 Hectares
<b>Owner</b>	St Albans City & District Council
<b>Designations</b>	Metropolitan Greenbelt; Conservation Area (the Leyton Road entrance lodge only)

### VISION STATEMENT

Rothamsted Park is an irreplaceable resource of history and opportunity. The Park's many visitors, from near and far, come to experience the fascinating history, rich wildlife, stunning views, and recreational facilities. The site is perfectly placed to offer visitors both tranquillity and relaxation close within the urban environment, while also enabling sport and play activities.

The Greenspace Action Plan (GAP) for Rothamsted Park sets out the management, maintenance and development framework for the site over five years. The GAP is reviewed annually, so that any outstanding tasks can be rescheduled as necessary. The GAP is also frequently reviewed in conjunction with the Countryside Management Service (CMS) and any other relevant bodies.

## **2. SITE DESCRIPTION**

### **2.1 *Location Map***

## **2.2    *Site Description Map***

### **2.3    *Constraints Map***



## 2.4 INTRODUCTION

Rothamsted Park is owned by St Albans City and District Council and is located close to Harpenden Town Centre. It covers an area of 23.7 hectares (58.6 acres) with many footpath links into the adjoining countryside.

The Park is much loved for its wide open spaces which provide opportunities for walking and general relaxation. The Park includes a sports centre, an indoor swimming pool, an outside paddling pool and a variety of sports facilities.

The sports pitch provision includes senior and junior football pitches and two cricket squares, with both sports sharing two sports pavilions. The hard court area accommodates netball, tennis and a 'third generation' synthetic grass surface five-a-side football pitch. The sports centre includes a sports hall and fitness centre.

Towards the town centre end of the Park there is a junior play area, the District's only custom built skateboard site, basket ball posts and a small formal garden. The wide open spaces have been deliberately left undeveloped, with areas of meadow.

## 2.5 GEOGRAPHY AND LANDSCAPE

Rothamsted Park has a country Park feel and appearance, with wide open spaces broken up by mature Oaks of former hedge lines. There are additional pockets of woodland planting, and the main avenue is dominated by lines of mature limes on both sides.

The more formal use and planting is concentrated near to the town centre end of the Park, whilst the more open areas lead out into farmland, which is owned and managed by Rothamsted Research (formerly Rothamsted Experimental Station). At this end of the Park areas of summer meadow border the sports pitches, with footpaths meandering through them.



The Landscape of Rothamsted Park

Almost the entire Park is laid out on gently sloping land, with gradients in several directions. This adds to the attractiveness of the landscape, but does present problems for sports pitches.

The Park 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	Scheduled Ancient Monument (SAM)	N/A
	Listed Buildings	N/A
County	Wildlife Site	N/A
District / Borough	Conservation Area	The lodge at the Leyton Road entrance is within the conservation area
	Metropolitan Green Belt	The majority of the Park (except the swimming pool) is in the greenbelt

## 2.6 HISTORY AND ARCHAEOLOGY

In 1623 Anne Wittewronge bought the Manor of Rothamsted and the estate was handed down through branches of the family, until 1822 when it was passed to the eight year old John Bennet Lawes.

Sir John Lawes, as he became, started carrying out agricultural experiments at the Manor House and in 1843 he founded the Rothamsted Experimental Station. In 1889 Sir John established the Laws Agricultural Trust; set up to ensure the continuation of the experiments after his death.



Sir John Bennet Lawes

During this time, what is now known as Rothamsted Park was part of the Rothamsted Estate. The main entrance to the Manor was from Hatching Green. The present entrance into Rothamsted Park from Leyton Road was created in 1880, when Sir John made the new avenue and lined it with lime trees.

Sir John died in 1890, and his son Charles inherited the estate. From 1901 Sir Charles opened the Park each Sunday from mid-day until one hour after sunset. The parish magazine at the time said "Harpenden people will appreciate Sir Charles consideration in thus opening his Park to his Park-less neighbours". It is not clear how long this arrangement lasted; it appears to have come to an end following the death of Sir Charles.

Sir Charles Lawes-Wittewronge died in 1911. He had revived the old family name of Wittewronge in 1902 by Royal Warrant. His son, another Sir John, was living in Australia, so the Manor House was leased to Major and the Hon. Mrs Sidebottom who remained there until 1939 when the house was requisitioned by the army. When Sir John died in 1931 the family decided to sell the estate.

Sir John Russell, the then director of the experimental station, was well aware that if the station did not buy the land, developers would, and it would be impossible to continue their research. The early nineteen thirties were a time of financial crisis, with no financial help available from the Government. A sum of £30,000 was needed to buy the estate, however a public appeal raised £35,000, and the purchase was completed on 18<sup>th</sup> May 1934.

Meanwhile the Harpenden Urban District Council, (HUDC) was negotiating to buy an area of Parkland from the estate of around 56 acres. On the 4<sup>th</sup> March 1938 the Free Press reported the HUDC was to acquire the lower part of the Park in order to provide playing fields and preserve an important open space. Contracts were exchanged in April 1938. The land was bought under the provisions of the Physical Training and Recreation Act 1937. HUDC applied to the County Council for a grant and were awarded a sum of £4,437.

On the 8<sup>th</sup> May 1939 the HUDC received details of a revised scheme for the layout of the Park, which was estimated to cost £23,725. The Council expected a substantial grant from the National Playing Fields Association. This was offered on 10<sup>th</sup> July; a grant not to exceed £4,000 towards the approved cost in respect of the layout. It was, however, promptly withdrawn in September when war was declared. Undeterred the Council decided to proceed, and in 1940 raised a loan of £13,543, repayable over 50 years.

Five acres of land, (the area which is now Harpenden Town Football Ground) were taken over in July 1941 for the wartime Potato Club, which started with 40 members. Dr E. W. Russell of Rothamsted experimental station was the club president, and he estimated that a 5 pole plot should produce about 5 hundred weight of potatoes per year. The club quickly acquired members and in the first year there were 140 plots producing an average of 7 hundredweight per plot. The club continued for the duration of the war.

The Manor House was requisitioned by the army in 1939, and they remained there until 1946. The troops used a well near the dell at the top end of the Park as a cess-pit. The Park entrance was damaged early in the war when the gates and railings were removed for salvage. After the war the restoration of the entrance was paid for by the Friends Provident Insurance Company who had their head office in Harpenden during the war. However, the restoration didn't include replacement gates.

Various sports were played in the Park during the war, but pitches do not seem to have been permanently laid out until peacetime. After the war the Park was used for the purposes for which it had been bought. Over the years football, cricket, hockey, tennis, lacrosse, pitch and putt and putting have all been played in the Park. The Harpenden Quoits Club had a pitch there from 1948 until the 1970s, when the site became a rose garden paid for from a bequest from a local resident.

The open air swimming pool was opened on 7<sup>th</sup> May 1960, with much of the cost being raised by public subscription. The sports hall was opened in 1975, one of the last acts of Harpenden Urban District Council. In 1974 the Park was transferred to the newly created St Albans City and District Council.

## **2.7 HABITATS AND WILDLIFE**

The close proximity of the Park to the surrounding countryside, the grounds of Rothamsted Research and mature gardens provide a range of habitats suitable for a diverse mix of wildlife.

### *Trees and Hedgerows*

The Park's landscape is dominated by ancient hedgerows, mature oaks and the lime tree avenue. Formerly farmland the park has developed over time to provide a haven for wildlife. The ancient hedgerows act as wildlife corridors linking into the wider countryside; they provide food and shelter for a wide range of species including birds, insects, small mammals and bats.

The veteran oak trees around the Park are the most significant landscape feature in the Park and are of high environmental value. Oak trees are rich in biodiversity and play an important part in the food web supporting more life forms than any other native tree including insects, birds, mammals and fungi. Dead wood is also an important habitat for wildlife and where possible should be left in the tree, when large branches fall they should be left where they land. The veteran trees need to be managed sensitively to maintain their wildlife importance and landscape characteristics.

The lime avenue also acts as a wildlife corridor linking to the other areas of the Park and the wider countryside; it provides an appealing landscape feature in the Park which needs to be maintained.

There are a few small wooded areas which are left untouched. Fallen tree trunks have been left in-situ at these sites. The largest of these wooded areas is situated on a steep bank, known by some as 'The Dell'. The bottom of the bank forms a natural drainage catchment area, and a pond forms in this catchment area during prolonged wet periods. Over the years a number of bird and bat boxes have been put up around the Park.

### *Summer Meadow*

The majority of Rothamsted Park is closely mown to accommodate the sports pitches. Areas of summer meadow with grass paths running through them have been established around some of the margins, with yellow rattle planted to allow the fine grasses to take hold. The soil is very fertile, so the summer meadows are dominated by grasses and there are a few ant hills, providing food for green woodpeckers. There is an interpretation panel explaining the benefits of the meadow area for wildlife and people.



The Summer Meadow



Summer Meadow Interpretation

### *Water*

There is no open or standing water in the Park apart from that which collects in the bottom of 'The Dell' after periods of heavy rain – see above.

## **2.8 ACCESS, FACILITIES AND INFRASTRUCTURE**

### *Entrances and Car Parking*

The Park has three main pedestrian entrances and four more informal entrances, and is well connected to the local rights of way network, with public footpath 12 running along the avenue and public footpaths 13 and 10 running along the northern boundary of the park. The more formal main pedestrian entrance is off the A1081 Leyton Road which passes through Harpenden Town Centre; this takes you through the former park gateway and onto the lime avenue. There is a large pay and display car park off Amenbury Lane next to the swimming pool, this is not part of the Park and is managed through a separate contractual arrangement. There is a main and informal pedestrian entrance to the park from this car park. The only car park provided within the boundaries of the Park, is a small free car park at the top of the Park adjacent to orchard pavilion and accessed off Orchard Avenue. The main users of this car park are sports clubs at the weekend and dog walkers during all other times, especially at the beginning and end of the day. The grounds maintenance contractor has a separate access directly off Amenbury Lane car park, with lockable bollards to prevent unauthorised parking.



Leyton Road Entrance



Amenbury Road Entrance

There are two smaller paths leading off the lime avenue at the Leyton Road end, one leading to the leisure centre and Amenbury Lane car park which is lit at night; the other one leading to the rose garden, the children's play area and the hard courts. Floodlights are provided for the hard courts for use in the evenings.

### *Lime Avenue*

A major feature of the Park is the lime avenue running through the site. The wide tarmacked path, lined with lime trees creates the avenue which runs from Leyton Road across the Park to join public footpaths near Rothamsted Research. Vehicle barriers have been placed at both ends of the avenue to prevent unauthorised vehicle access. Vehicular access into the Park from the avenue is for maintenance purposes, and for use for special events such as the May carnival. Public footpath 12 runs along the avenue from the Research Centre to Amenbury Lane, it is also used as a permissive cycle route through the Park. In between the limes the avenue has been planted up with spring flowering bulbs.



Cycling Code of Conduct

### *Buildings*

There are a number of buildings situated in Rothamsted Park. Some of these buildings are managed directly by the Community Services Department, whereas others are leased to individuals or organisations. The details of which are shown in table 2 below.



**Table 2** – Building inventory.

Building	Location	Occupancy/Use	Maintenance / Repairs
Leisure Centre	Off the main avenue, near to Leyton Road entrance	Managed through Leisure Management contract	SADC and 1 Life
Swimming Pool	Adjacent to Amenbury Lane Car Park	Managed through Leisure Management contract	SADC and 1 Life
Park Entrance Lodge	Adjacent to Leyton Road entrance	Private owner	Private owner
Football Clubhouse	North boundary, off the access road from Amenbury Car Park	Harpenden Town Football Club	The Football Club, with some exterior repairs down to SADC
Football Stand	Adjacent to Harpenden Town's pitch	Harpenden Town Football Club	Harpenden Town Football Club
Park Maintenance Depot	North boundary, next to the Swimming Pool	Joint occupancy between Grounds Maintenance contractor and Street Cleansing Contractor	Full repair lease contractor
Amenbury Sports Pavilion	North side of the Park, at the end of Harpenden Town FC pitch	Hired by football and cricket clubs	SADC
Orchard Avenue Sports Pavilion	North West corner of the Park, accessed off Orchard Avenue	Hired by football and cricket clubs	SADC Closed due to internal damage



Orchard Avenue Pavilion



Harpenden Town Football Club



Harpenden Leisure Centre

### *Entrance Signs and Notice Boards*

There are five entrance signs around the site at the main entrances, welcoming visitors to the site and providing contact details of SADC. There are also four site notice boards offering opportunities to display information to the public and Park users. In particular it allows the display of the annual action plan map. Harpenden Town Council has taken an active interest in helping to manage the notice boards, as their offices are adjacent to the Park.



Entrance Sign



Notice Board

### *The Hard Courts*

The fenced hard court areas, adjacent to the children's play area, cater for tennis, netball and five a side football. They are managed and maintained through the Leisure Management contract, with the courts being floodlit to allow for maximum use. In the life time of the last GAP the courts were refurbished and awarded Beacon status in 2011, as part of the AEGON Parks Tennis programme in recognition of their high quality.



Five a Side Pitch



Hard Courts

### *Teenagers Play Equipment*

Rothamsted Park has become the home of the District Council's first custom built skateboard site, opening in 2003. Nearby basketball posts have been installed along with a large bucket swing and a zip slide.



Skate Park



Zip Line



Bucket Swing

### *Youth Shelter*

A permanent youth shelter, painted green to blend in with the surroundings was installed in the Park in 2014 and has proved to be very popular.



Mobile Youth Shelter



Children's Play Area

### *Children's Play Areas*

The play area is enclosed by fencing and hedges and the site maintenance is included within the grounds maintenance contract. 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.

Although the playground is well used, and is the second largest children's play area provided by the Council, it is located in a secluded corner of the Park and partially hidden by hedges. There is a good selection of play equipment, if slightly outdated, spread out over a large area, but there is no structure or thinking behind the layout and internal paths are limited.

#### *Rose Garden and Old Putting Green*

The rose garden, with numerous roses, has several benches located around a central flower bed reached by a crazy paved path, use to relax and enjoy the garden. The whole garden area is now starting to look tired and dated. Between the rose garden and the children's play area there is an area, surrounded by fencing and beech hedges, which was formerly used as a putting green. This area now has no real function.

#### *Barbeque Areas*

There are two permanent barbeque areas on the site which are well used. They need to be regularly checked to keep them maintained and suitable for use i.e. replacing ash bins.



Barbeque Area

#### *Dog and Litter Bins*

There are several litter and dog refuse bins around the park. The use of one bin for both types of refuse are being used across other Council owned green spaces and will be rolled out across the Park.

#### *Public Toilets*

There are no public toilets in the Park, although arrangements have been put in place to allow public access to the toilets in the leisure centre. Users of the leisure centre, the swimming pool and the sports pavilions have access to toilets within these buildings. In addition, temporary toilets are provided in the summer within the fenced grounds of the swimming pool, for users of the paddling pool.

#### *Cricket Squares*

The Park has two cricket squares, which are both fully booked through the grounds maintenance contract during the summer. The users are local clubs who play in

leagues. The top square near to the Orchard Avenue car park was re-laid further into the Park and enlarged, following complaints from nearby residents that balls were landing in their gardens and on the road.



A Cricket Match in Progress

The hiring of the cricket pitches is accompanied by the user being able to hire the nearby pavilion. The pavilion is equipped with tables and chairs, as well as a hot water urn for tea making. There is also a portable cricket score board for their use.

The cricketers and spectators would prefer to be able to take their cars up to the pitch, in the traditional fashion, but this presents problems in a Park which is not open to vehicles. The clubs are allowed limited vehicle access to transport their equipment to the pavilions, but general car access has been denied.

#### *Football Pitches*

There are two pitches provided for senior football and five pitches provided for junior football. The topography of the Park prevents an increase in the current number of pitches. Goal posts were replaced through the last plan period to meet new FA requirements and junior pitch sizes increased.

#### *Pavilions*

The use of the sports pavilions has been segregated, with the Amenbury Lane pavilion being used by summer cricket and winter senior football. And the Orchard Avenue pavilion caters for summer cricket and winter junior football. Parents monitor the use of the pavilion used for junior football, which makes it possible to allow female football games.

## **2.8 COMMUNITY, MANAGEMENT AND EVENTS**

#### *Leases and Agreements*

The management and development of Rothamsted Park takes into account a number of contract lease agreements between the Council and various stakeholder groups.

These include:

##### *Leisure Management Contract*

The Council's Leisure Management contract includes the operation and management of the leisure centre, the swimming pool, the paddling pool and the hard court areas. The grounds maintenance of these facilities is also included within this contract.

##### *Grounds Maintenance Contract*

The rest of the Park, other than the football ground, is included within the grounds maintenance contract. This includes use of the grounds maintenance depot, (which is

also shared by the Council's street cleansing contractor) and the letting, management and cleaning of the two sports pavilions.

#### *Football Ground and Clubhouse*

Harpenden Town Football Club has leased an area which includes their football pitch and clubhouse for many years. The club has erected a small football stand on one side of the pitch and floodlighting for the pitch. The football club have applied for planning permission to update the existing pavilion, but have greater ambitions of providing a new club house in the future that will also incorporate a café and toilet provision accessible to the park users.

#### *Park Entrance Lodge*

The lodge at the Leyton Road entrance to the Park has been sold to a private owner. This sale included vehicular access to the lodge for parking purposes.

#### *Mobile Phone Mast*

One of the corner lighting columns for Harpenden Town Football Club is being used to support a mobile phone aerial. It is linked underground to an equipment room within the clubhouse.

#### *Harpenden Tennis Club*

Harpenden Tennis Club has an occasional need to use Council land to access their courts for maintenance purposes. The access is arranged on an 'as and when' required basis and the Council does not withhold permission unreasonably.

#### *Ice Cream Concession*

The Ice Cream Concession within the Park is currently contracted to 'Ribera' who are based in Hoddesdon, the arrangement allows for one pitch within the Park.

#### *Fitness Groups*

The Council has a permit scheme in place and a number of organisations are allowed to conduct formal fitness sessions in the Park 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 Park and park users.

#### *Special Events*

A special event is a term used by the Council to describe one-off additional usage of the Park that is in addition to regular use such as sports pitches. It can include a wide range of events, from carnivals to sponsored walks. All event applications go to the Council's safety advisory group for approval. And all fitness groups/boot camps have to apply for a licence.



Play In the Park



Orienteering Map

### *Activities for Young Children*

Play in the Parks provides opportunities for children and young people aged between 5 – 12 years of age, to access free quality and inclusive sport and physical activity sessions within their local community. Traditionally the project has operated during the summer school holiday period. The Council funds the programme and it is delivered through the St Albans Arts, Sport and Health Development Team.

### *Orienteering Course*

Working in conjunction with the Hertfordshire Orienteering Club, an orienteering course has been laid out across the Park, and a leaflet produced to assist users of the course. The leaflet can be downloaded from the Council's web site, or purchased for a small fee from the leisure centre.

### *Memorial Tree Planting*

There is occasional demand to donate memorial trees, which the Council is happy to accommodate. This has been added to by donations from recent Mayors of both the District and Town Councils. The Park's most famous memorial tree is now a major oak, which was planted to commemorate the Golden Jubilee of Queen Victoria, by Sir John Lawes on 20<sup>th</sup> June 1887.

### *Park Management*

The direct management responsibility for the Park rests with St Albans City and District Council, however the Council attempts to involve the community and the Park's other stakeholders in its management.

The Park's Management Committee was created in 1999 to encourage stakeholder and community involvement in the management and development of the Park. The terms of reference were to:

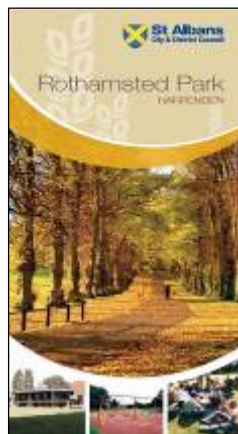
- Meet at least twice a year to discuss the issues that affect Rothamsted Park
- Provide an active line of communication for local groups, organisations and sports clubs with an interest in the well-being and future enhancement of the Park
- Encourage and channel active support from the community and park users, through discussion of issues and dissemination of information
- Deal with issues of mutual interest to all users and not with specific issues between individuals or parties
- Act as a discussion group only with the views of the Management Committee being put forward to other Council Committees as specific relevant issues arise
- While its decisions are non-binding on the Council, the forum continues to have a significant input into the development of the Park and now has a membership that includes:

District and Town Council Councillors,  
Harpenden Town Council,  
Council's Parks Manager,  
John O'Conner (Grounds Maintenance) Ltd  
1 Life (the Council's Leisure Management contractor),  
Harpenden Town Football Club,  
Harpenden Colts Junior Football Club,  
Harpenden Swimming Club,  
Hertfordshire Orienteering Club,  
Local Cricket Clubs,  
Police Community Team

The Management Committee is now administered directly through Community Services and chaired by a Councillor who is elected annually from the membership. Minutes and agendas are action based (see link below), and monitor and evaluate the progress of the management plan. [Rothamsted Park Management Committee meeting minutes](#).

#### *Rothamsted Park Leaflet*

The Council has developed a Park leaflet which is available from the swimming pool, the leisure centre and the nearby information centre at Harpenden Town Council's offices. It can also be viewed and downloaded from the Rothamsted Park page on the Council's website. The leaflet is now is starting to look a bit dated and could do with being updated.



Current Park Leaflet

#### *Council Website*

The Council provides a dedicated webpage for the Park [www.stalbans.gov.uk/rothamstedpark](http://www.stalbans.gov.uk/rothamstedpark)

### 3. ANALYSIS AND EVALUATION

#### 3.1 A WELCOMING PLACE

##### *Signage/Interpretation*

Entrance signs are installed at each entrance to the Park except at the formal entrance (off Leyton Road) and the small entrance off Amenbury Lane; these are now out of date and need refreshing. A larger more informative board is planned for the main entrance which will include an orientation map and contact details.

Directional finger post signs pick up links with external footpaths and roads; a lot of these need updating – especially the rights of way flags. There is a Rothamsted Research map at the top of the avenue which is also looking a bit dated and should be relocated to not detract from the view of the Park at this location.

Keeping the notice boards up to date will improve visitor's first impressions, making the Park feel more inviting and welcoming. There is scope for smaller versions of the main entrance orientation map based signage at all the other Park entrances to guide visitors around the Park. Additional interpretation panels about the history, environmental conservation and management of the Park can be installed at key locations.

##### *Access, Gates and Fencing*

The Park is not locked or generally provided with access gates. Much of the boundary fencing is shared with adjoining landowners, such as Rothamsted Research. Therefore, fence maintenance and repair is usually restricted to small areas such as the children's play area or the hard courts.

The formal entrance off Leyton Road was reinstated after the Second World War and new entrance pillars were installed but without gates. The area just inside the pillars is in private ownership along with the house. A lockable metal vehicle barrier and railings had to be installed slightly further into the Park to restrict access. The metalwork looks unsightly and spoils the view into the Park. By removing the metalwork and replacing it with a mirror image of the entrance pillars - with large bespoke metal gates with the Park's name on them - will instantly make the Park feel more welcoming and frame the avenue of limes. The raised bed by the entrance should be removed and the area grass seeded to improve the view up the avenue. The existing pillars need to be inspected for any signs of wear and repaired if required.

At the top of the avenue there is another locked metal vehicle barrier, various wooden bollards and duplicate signage. It would be worth improving this entrance as the views across the Park from here are stunning. The layout and type of structures will need to be considered; by just the addition of the Park's name on the barrier will instantly improve the look of the entrance.

The pedestrian access point in the top northwest corner of the site onto public footpath 13 has an old wooden kissing gate which is no longer in use. This should be removed to improve the appearance of the entrance. The small pedestrian access point from Amenbury Lane onto public footpath 13 needs to be widened, old fencing needs to be removed and this section of path should be surfaced to improve access during wet weather.

The main pedestrian entrance to the park and leisure centre from Amenbury car park is more of a narrow alleyway. This area should be redesigning to make an attractive



pedestrian gateway into the park. Funding would need to be sought for any improvements this could be tied into any redevelopments happening in the vicinity.

The third main pedestrian entrance is through Orchard Road car park, this area needs to be made more inviting see below for details of improvements.

#### *Paths and Car Park*

There is an annual repair budget which is sufficient to cover annual repairs to paths and the car park. However, the budget is not sufficient to address larger capital works such as widening the paths and the total relaying of surfaces.

Orchard Road car park is not very attractive in its appearance and being the only car park within the Park it should be made more inviting. The metal fencing and redundant post at the front of the car park should be removed and replaced with native hedge species. The new plants may need to have some protective fencing around them to avoid any accidental damage from grass cutting and foot traffic. The existing posts around the car park should be replaced with new bollards to stop cars from driving onto the Park. A lockable bollard should be installed for emergency access across the Park.

The path around the leisure centre needs to be widened to allow people to stand and read the notice board without blocking the path. The adjacent area for cycle parking needs to be enlarged so that cycles can fit onto the hard standing and not stick out into the path. The number of cycle racks should be increased to encourage more people to cycle to the Park.

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

Site risk assessments are carried out to evaluate the potential risks throughout the Park to all park 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.

The grounds maintenance contract now includes a 6 monthly hard surface inspection and report which is sent to our infrastructure officer to alert any areas of concern and items to be added to the planned maintenance programme.

#### *Tree Surveys*

The grounds maintenance contractor is responsible for carrying out a tree 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 especially along the lime avenue. 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 the large oaks and any that are should be removed (see 3.5 veteran trees).

### **3.3 CLEAN AND WELL MAINTAINED**

#### *Park's Buildings – Maintenance and Repairs*

The Council has devised an annual planned maintenance and repairs programme for all the Park's buildings, following site inspections by the Council's Building Surveyor.

#### *Children's Play Area*

The current toddler play area is outdated and in a secluded part of the open space. Plans are being developed to move the children's play area nearer to the rest of the play equipment as part of a major refurbishment of this area of the park. Funding needs to be sought and planning permission obtained, this is to be progressed over the winter.

#### *Skate Park*

The skate park has also become dated and needs to be refurbished. Plans have been developed but funding still needs to be secured.

#### *Park Furniture*

Benches are painted and stained every year through the grounds maintenance contract. When new benches are installed (especially along the lime avenue) they need to be level with the existing path and each one should have a level concrete pad next to them large enough to accommodate a wheelchair/pushchair and person pushing it. Along the lime avenue where benches are set slightly further into the Park surfaced paths should be installed to link them to the main path, this will make the benches accessible to all users.

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 bins. 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.

#### *Public Toilets*

Subject to plans, council agreements and consultation this may be included in an upcoming project.

#### *Shrub Planting*

The main area of shrub planting in the Park is to be found within the rose garden, where they are mixed with shrub roses; and in the planted raised flowerbeds by the two main entrances at Leyton Road and Amenbury Lane. The raised flowerbed at Leyton Road is past its best and should be removed and the area grass seeded to improve the view up the avenue. The grounds maintenance contract includes for the mulching of all shrub borders. The area of shrub planting may increase with the landscaping project.

### **3.4 SUSTAINABILITY**

By buying trees from an approved supplier that are suitable for the site and of the right provenance for the area will reduce the risk of bringing in infectious diseases, this will save money on the cost of any treatment that might have been required (see appendix 6.2).

Seeding areas with annual flowers, like in the rose garden, requires less water and is cheaper than using bedding plants.

### **3.5 CONSERVATION AND HERITAGE**

#### *Trees*

##### *Planting and Management*

The Park's landscape is dominated by mature Oaks and the Lime tree avenue. Over recent years a number of other species have been introduced sporadically. Ornamental memorial tree planting is being kept to the more formal areas of the Park near to the leisure centre.



To preserve the landscape features of the Park and not bring in any unsuitable species, an agreed species list has been developed (see appendix 6.2). This includes details of what and where to plant, approved suppliers and the best method for planting – which includes stakes, protection, watering and aftercare. The main priority is to maintain the landscape heritage of the Park by planting oaks and limes, as replacements for the existing older trees and to retain the old hedgerows and tree lines.

The lime trees along the avenue need to be crown-lifted (lifting of the lower branches) this will improve access and views along the avenue. Deadwood in trees that overhang pathways, including the lime avenue should be removed.

#### *Veteran Trees*

There are a large number of veteran trees - mainly oak around the park, 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 6.3) to provide advice on their management, which will include things like leaving large branches where they fall, increasing the area of summer meadow around them and removing epicormic growth. Benches should be removed from beneath the large trees to stop unnecessary pollarding of branches (see 3.2 tree surveys).

#### *Other Trees*

More recently trees have been randomly planted in the Park in areas of meadow and in the bottom of 'The Dell' which can become water logged; these need to be moved to more suitable locations. There are a number of small copses and larger pockets of woodland (behind 'The Dell') dotted around the Park, these need to be managed by the removal of self set and unwanted species and by the planting of more appropriate ones (see woodland management map and appendix 6.2 for more details).

#### *Hedgerows*

There are several hedgerows around the site some of which can only be maintained on one side (i.e. boundaries to residential properties). There has been a build-up of leaves behind the hedgerow around the football club this build-up is detrimental to the grassland which has several ant hills. Leaves should be cleared from this area and not left to build up. The area of rough grassland behind the hedgerow can be left to develop, strimming and removing the arisings once a year – avoiding the ant hills.

Rothamsted Research should be approached to see if they have any plans to buffer the hedgerow at the bottom of the site to protect it from potential spray drift from the fields. As it does not look as though it is growing very well, a buffer will also protect the wildflower margins in the Park from any potential spray drift.

#### *Summer Meadow*

The areas of summer meadow have developed well and should be extended. There are lots of areas around the Park, which cannot be used for other activities and could be turned into summer meadow. The existing area of meadow should be extended up the slope to areas that are not suitable for football pitches and incorporate all the large trees. Path can be mown through the meadow areas so people can enjoy walking through the wildflowers. Areas of meadow can be developed alongside all the hedgerows around the Park to act as buffers.

#### *Amenity Cut Grassland*

The large majority of the grassland around the Park is amenity cut. This is cut twice a month during the growing season as part of the grounds maintenance contract.

#### *Compost Area*

The former composting area has since become redundant and overgrown with nettles which have grown out into the lime avenue. The nettles should be cut back to at least 5m from the edge of the path so that the lime trees at this point are incorporated back into the avenue. The area beneath the trees can then be maintained as grass. The compost area should be reinstated as a place to compost leaves collected within the park, this will save on time and fuel costs by not having to remove the leaves from site. To be able to establish the compost area, firstly the overgrown nettle area should be cut and collected, this will allow the compost area to be marked out. A temporary natural fence should be installed so the compost area does not spill out into the park; this can be removed once the vegetation has grown up around the edges. The composted material once rotten down can then be used on local allotment sites.

#### *The Rose Garden and Old Putting Green*

The rose garden is now in need of a refurbishment. Plans are in place to extend the area incorporating the rose garden and the old putting green. The plans include planting, hard landscaping and the provision of a community orchard. The Council is actively looking at funding opportunities for this project.

#### *Water*

There are no waterbodies, streams or ditches in the Park. The bottom of 'The Dell' holds water during the winter months and during periods of heavy rain. During periods of prolonged or intense rainfall water collects in the nearby fields of Rothamsted Research and disperses into the Park, its course can be traced following the contours on the ground. Problems have occurred with flooding to businesses and local residents at the Leyton Road end of the Park, water from the fields could be one source of the problem (see appendix 6.4 for HCC Flood Investigation Report). This should be addressed by changing the grass cutting regime around 'The Dell', any surface water would be directed into the bottom of the depression, stopping it from flowing further into the Park, this area can hold a large quantity of water which will naturally drain away.

The main source of surface water flooding seems to be from the south west corner of the sports complex and car park on Amenbury Lane adjacent to the swimming pool in the park. The accumulated surface water flows downhill to the bottom corner of the car park where pipes bypass the drains and sends the water straight down the path and into the Park. All parties are aware of this issue and it will be addressed in the near future.

### **3.6 COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT**

#### *Park Ranger*

The Council employs a full time Park Ranger to patrol the park. They act as the first point of contact for the local community about any issues that they may have. They also run a programme of guided walks around the Park. There is an opportunity to extend the activities the Park Ranger can offer by holding natural play days and other children focused events during term time and at weekends. This will engage more children with their natural environment and local wildlife.

### *Youth Shelter*

The youth shelter is very popular and well used. It is in need of repainting to prolong its life.

### *Play Facilities*

To improve the basketball area and increase its use, the 'D' area underneath the hoop should be surfaced; the other hoop should be removed as unless the whole court is surfaced, as grass is not a very good surface for playing basketball on. The Park Ranger could ask local children for their opinion to see if they use one or both hoops when playing basketball, this should be done before any works are carried out.

### *Special Events*

The Park plays host to two major special events each year. The May Carnival and the July Highland Games. In addition one of the Council sponsored 'Bands in the Park' concerts is held in the Park during the summer. Continuing to host these events is important in maintaining the profile of the Park.

### *Activities for young people*

There are lots of activities to keep young people active during the summer such as Play in the Park. Promotion and publicity is key, to make it a success.

### *Park Café*

Subject to plans, council agreements and consultation this may be included in an upcoming project.

### *Sports Areas*

A pitch and Amenbury Lane pavilion is leased to Harpenden Town FC and managed and maintained by the club. The club would like to improve the facilities at their ground, and are exploring a number of options with the Council. The Council is interested in exploring the possibility of extending the pavilion to provide more space for the increase in demand for recreational activities.

Harpenden Colts have expressed concerns with the surface of some of the pitches. The pitches quickly become waterlogged, with depressions and hollows filling up which has made the pitches unsuitable for use for several months during the winter months. More investigation is required but resurfacing and drainage of the pitches should be considered as potential options for making good; additional funding would need to be sought to undertake any works. Harpenden Colts would be happy to work with the Council to try and obtain this and can provide volunteers to help carry out some of the small scale improvement works.

### *Five-A-Side Pitch*

The pitch has been converted into a multi-use games area (MUGA) with a "third generation" synthetic grass surface, two goals and fencing around the perimeter.

### *Orienteering Course*

A map for the course is available to download from the Council's website.

### *Barbeque Areas*

The barbeque areas have proved to be extremely popular. Ongoing low cost maintenance is required to keep the areas functional.

### *Marketing*

The Park has its own management plan, leaflet and web page which are updated regularly. The Town Council also includes relevant articles about the Park and the

management plan in its local newsletter, which is delivered to every home in Harpenden.

The Park is well known locally, and there have been tentative enquiries to stage other major events in the Park. With the summer months of May and July reserved on a regular basis, it does restrict the window of opportunity, but there is capacity to increase the number of appropriate special events.

The Park has been featured in a number of commercials, television programmes and films; the Parks department are looking to publicising the Park as a filming location through a number of location management companies.

#### *Sports Facility Development*

The Council is planning to extend and transform Harpenden swimming pool into one integrated leisure centre, using the existing sports centre to develop a new arts and cultural centre.

In addition, the council will explore how the parking provision can be increased to satisfy the increased demand of the new facilities and the town in general.

The development of the initial concept designs and the impact of the new facilities and parking provision on Rothamsted Park are subject to an ongoing intensive community engagement process.

St Albans City and District Council Landowner's Vision statement for the new Harpenden Leisure, Arts and Cultural Center's is set out below.

Physical activity, wellbeing, socialising, actively engaging in the arts and cultural events are part of a healthy, connected and happy community.

The Harpenden Leisure, Arts and Cultural Centres project is currently the largest community investment project in the district. Our ambition is to extend and transform the swimming pool site by December 2018 into one modern integrated leisure facility, accommodating a variety of sports and activities, made attractive for all age groups and means. The project aims to deliver a 21st century leisure offer through an improvement to the main pool area and a new larger learner pool. The gym will accommodate many more stations than before and a health suite/spa will be considered. It is anticipated that a sports hall, spin studio, two multi-activity rooms, crèche/multi-purpose room and a café with terrace overlooking the park will be included in the final design.

The existing sports centre could become by December 2019, a fully refitted 21<sup>st</sup> century venue for arts and culture with a flexible and contemporary museum display area. It could have a larger theatre than the current Harpenden Public Halls, three big multi-use function rooms, a rehearsal room/green room as well as a bar and refreshments area with great views into the park. We envisage the building will have a generous main entrance from the park.

This investment programme for 21st century leisure, art and cultural facilities in Harpenden is addressing many of the known shortcomings of the current facilities. They come with age and change in users' needs and expectations. Critically, the project needs to work to a £18 million budget. As you possibly know already, the project must be self-funding with no extra funding required from residents' Council Tax. We envisage through a collaborative design Charrette process, to bring forward the redevelopment of Harpenden Public Halls at a later date to help provide some of

the funding for the new centres. This will also allow us to deliver the projects while reducing the level disruption of services.

In summary, the council as landowner has outlined the following principles on how this project will be advanced:

- We will pursue to design, build and run uplifting and durable facilities through architecture, landscaping and interiors that fundamentally improves the attractiveness of our local leisure, art and cultural offer. This includes energy efficiency measures and an increase in overall size and range of activities on offer. We believe we can attract more people of all ages through improved experiences.
- We seek to provide additional car and cycle parking.
- We will deliver the project as a self-funded project with no requirement for contributions from Council Tax.
- We will keep closure of facilities to a minimum.
- We will engage proactively with users, local organisations, councillors and residents throughout the planning and design process of all three sites (the pool site, sports centre and Harpenden Public Halls).

Information on the on-going engagement process and updates on the project progress can be found at: [www.stalbans.gov.uk/harpendenleisure](http://www.stalbans.gov.uk/harpendenleisure)

#### **4. AIMS AND OBJECTIVES**

##### **A A WELCOMING PLACE**

To provide a safe and welcoming experience for visitors and users of Rothamsted Park

- A1 Improve all site entrances to form welcoming, appealing gateways to the Park
- A2 Provide a suitable network of accessible paths and transport routes throughout the Park
- A3 Ensure that visitors are able to successfully navigate to, from, and around the Park
- A4 Provide new park facilities where the need and/or opportunity has been identified
- A5 Remove clutter and poorly sited furniture

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

To ensure that visitors feel safe and secure in all areas of the Park

- B1 Carryout regular risk assessments of the Park's facilities, natural features and general environment
- B2 Ensure existing play/sports facilities are maintained in safe and serviceable condition
- B3 Continue close liaison between park staff, the management committee, local community organisations, agencies, and community policing
- B4 Maintain a visual presence in the Park (Park Ranger)

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

To ensure all fixtures, fittings and buildings in the Park 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 and buildings are regularly maintained and used to their full potential

##### **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 the historic Parkland landscape and formal gardens, and maintain and enhance the quality and value of the Park's habitats

- E1 Maintain the continuity of tree cover and hedgerows by new planting and ongoing management
- E2 Manage the veteran trees and landscape features across the
- E3 Maintain summer meadow areas
- E4 Continue the development of the rose garden and old putting green project
- E5 Manage the grassland throughout the Park to reflect the needs of recreation and biodiversity

## **F COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT**

Enable local people and regular visitors to take an active role in the conservation, decision making and development of Rothamsted Park

- F1 Organise and enable a range of events and activities that fully utilise the Parks facilities
- F2 Provide opportunities for volunteers to be involved in the management and maintenance of the Park
- F3 Consult park users and local people during the production of park management plans and the development of new facilities

## **G MARKETING**

Maintain and develop a strong identity for the Park 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, key stakeholders and the community; raising awareness and interest in the Park
- G2 Promote awareness and interest in the Park
- G3 Establish and introduce a standard, uniform design of furniture that gives the Park a distinct identity

## **5. ACTION PLANS AND MAPS**



## 5.0 FIVE YEAR ACTION PLAN

### 5.1 ANNUAL ITEMS

Action	Obj. no:	When	Responsibility	Funding	Estimated Cost	Spec. ref:	Status (completed/comments)
Play area inspection and undertake any repairs as required	B2	Weekly	SADC (JOC)	GM Budget			Completed
Play area service	B2	Every 6 months	SADC (JOC)	GM Budget			Completed
Inspect all paths and hard surfaces, undertake repairs as required	A2, B1	Every 6 months	SADC (JOC)				Completed
Commission an independent inspection of play area and skate park and carry out identified improvements / repairs	B1	Annually	SADC				Completed
Condition survey of the Park's boundary and internal fences/gates; undertake repairs as required	B1	Every 6 months	SADC (JOC)	GM Budget			Completed
Health & Safety inspections and undertaking of works	B1	When required	SADC	GM Budget			Completed
Empty dog waste bins minimum once a week or when required	C1	All year	SADC	GM Budget			Completed
Empty litter bins on a weekly basis	C1	All year	SADC	GM Budget			Completed
Maintain a programme of information on the park's notice boards with a content review every month	A1	Monthly	SADC/HTC				Ongoing

Action	Obj. no:	When	Responsibility	Funding	Estimated Cost	Spec. ref:	Status (completed/comments)
Refurbish and stain all benches; install paths to benches where appropriate	C2	Annual	SADC (JOC)	GM Budget			Annual bench maintenance complete
Carry out comprehensive soil analysis of sport pitches to allow a more detailed chemical application Therefore reducing unnecessary over application	B1, B2, C1	Autumn	SADC (JOC)				
Address Park flooding	B3	Ongoing	SADC/HCC				Working with flood officer from HCC
Building maintenance as required	C2	Ongoing	SADC				As and when required
Remove all graffiti in accordance with the District Council's graffiti policy	B1	When required	SADC	GM Budget			As and when required
Management of vegetation through the Grounds Maintenance Contract	C1, E3, E5	Apr – Oct	SADC	GM Budget			
Complete bi-annual tree safety survey and undertake emergency tree work	B1	Apr & Oct	SADC	Leisure Tree Budget?			
Level any new benches and provide a surfaced pad next to them to accommodate wheelchairs and pushchairs	A2, A3	Ongoing	SADC (JOC)				
Tree management – aftercare, formative pruning, planting, veteran trees	E1, E2, F2	Ongoing	See woodland management				
Ranger led volunteer/community events and walks in the park	B4, F1, G1, G2	Ongoing	SADC	Staff Time			Uncompleted

Action	Obj. no:	When	Responsibility	Funding	Estimated Cost	Spec. ref:	Status (completed/comments)
Contribute to Rothamsted Park Committee Meetings	B3, F3	Twice a year	SADC				Completed
Liaise with officers/company working on the leisure facility development	A4, B3, F3	Ongoing	SADC				Ongoing on a weekly basis
Liaise with other users	B3, F2, F3	Ongoing	SADC				
Investigate using Rothamsted Park as a filming location	F1, G1, G2	Ongoing	SADC				
Update the Parks' webpage when required	E1, F1, F2	When required	SADC				
Address anti-social behaviour issues through Park Ranger and Police Community Support Officers	B3, B4	Ongoing	SADC				Ongoing
Review and update annual action plans	F3	Spring	SADC				

**Abbreviations:**

CMS – Countryside Management Service  
SADC – St Albans City & District Council  
HCC – Hertfordshire County Council  
HTC – Harpenden Town Council

Vols - Volunteers  
JOC – John O'Connors  
GM – Grounds Maintenance  
RoW – Rights of Way

## 5.2 WOODLAND MANAGEMENT 2017-22

Action	Obj. no:	When	Responsibility	Funding	Estimated Cost	Spec. ref:	Status (completed/comments)
Maintain hedgerows with oaks as standard trees	E1, E2, F2	Ongoing	SADC				
Plant up gaps in hedgerows with replacement oak trees	E1, E2, F2	Year 1 & when required	CMS/Vols				
Remove epicormic growth	E1, E2, F2	Years 1, 3 and 5	CMS/Vols				
Aftercare	E1, E2, F2	Years 2-5	CMS/Vols				
Plant up gaps in tree line with replacement oak trees	E1, E2, F2	Year 1 & when required	CMS/Vols				
Clear dead and dying scrub and plant up with native species to provide an understorey	E1, E2, F2	Year 1	CMS/Vols				
Remove dead wood and crown lift lime trees along the avenue	E1, E2, F2	Year 1 & when required	SADC				Crown lifted on an annual basis
Plant up gaps with new lime trees	E1, E2, F2	Year 1 & when required	CMS/Vols				
Remove tree planted in wet hollow, replant at edge of the Dell woodland	E1, E2, F2	Year 1	CMS/Vols				
Clear scrub in the Dell and plant with native species to provide an understorey	E1, E2, F2	Year 1	CMS/Vols				

<b>Action</b>	<b>Obj. no:</b>	<b>When</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Funding</b>	<b>Estimated Cost</b>	<b>Spec. ref:</b>	<b>Status (completed/comments)</b>
Maintain row of mature oaks	E1, E2, F2	Ongoing	SADC				
Plant up gaps with replacement oak trees, holly could be removed to create an additional gap	E1, E2, F2	Year 1 & when required	CMS/Vols				
Remove old metal cricket screen from centre of copse and dispose of off site	E1, E2, F2	Year 1	SADC				Complete
Keep large chestnut and sycamore, remove small area of scrub and plant up with native species in groups of 3	E1, E2, F2	Year 1	CMS/Vols				

# Rothamsted Park Woodland Management 2017-22



### 5.3 YEAR 1 ACTION PLAN 2017-18

Action	Obj. no:	When	Responsibility	Funding	Estimated Cost	Spec. ref:	Status (completed/comments)
Design, cost up and deliver a new entrance layout for Leyton Road entrance	A1, A5, D1, D2, G3	Summer	CMS/SADC				On hold due to sports centre redevelopment
Design and install an interpretation panel for Leyton Road entrance	A1, A3, F1, F3, G2, G3	Summer	CMS/SADC/ Vols				To be undertaken in 2019
Carry out improvements to all entrances around the Park	A1, A2, A3, A5, F3, G3	Summer	CMS/SADC/ Vols				
Carry out improvements to Orchard Avenue car park	A1, A2, A3, A5, F3, G3	Summer	CMS/SADC/ Vols				
Design and install new entrance signs	A1, F3, G3	Summer	CMS/SADC/ Vols				
Design and install new interpretation	A1, F3, G3	Summer	CMS/SADC/ Vols				
Improve cycle parking and surface around notice board by leisure centre	A2	Summer	CMS/SADC				
Repaint youth shelter	B1, B2	Summer	SADC				Will be removed shortly due to compound area for sports centre redevelopment.

Improve basketball area	B1, B2	N/A	SADC				Will be removed shortly due to compound area for sports centre redevelopment.
Change all park litter bins to recycling bins	A4, G3	N/A	SADC				Removed 20 bins and replaced with 10 dual recycling units Feb 18
<b>Action</b>	<b>Obj. no:</b>	<b>When</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Funding</b>	<b>Estimated Cost</b>	<b>Spec. ref:</b>	<b>Status (completed/comments)</b>
Draft new byelaws and consult with stakeholders and public	B3, F3	N/A	SADC				
Seek funding for new landscape design for the rose garden and disused putting green	D1, D2	Ongoing	SADC				
Seek funding for new play area, location tbc	D1, D2	Ongoing	SADC				Play Group(PARC) now formed and beginning fundraising
Woodland management including tree planting – see separate map and action plan	E1, E2	Ongoing	See woodland management				
Remove benches from beneath tree canopies to avoid unnecessary pruning	E1, E2	Spring	SADC				
Create surfaced paths to benches away from avenue and level any new benches	A2, A3	Summer	CMS				
Increase the area of summer meadow	E3	Autumn	SADC				
Improve the old compost area	tbc	tbc	CMS/SADC				Introduced Nov 17



Publish a QR code for the site	G2	N/A	SADC				
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#### 5.4 YEAR 2 ACTION PLAN 2018-19

Action	Obj. no.	When	Responsibility	Funding	Estimated Cost	Spec. ref:	Status (completed/comments)
Update and distribute the Park leaflet	G2	Feb 2019	SADC				
Undertake a Park user survey	G2, F2	N/A	SADC				
Woodland management including tree planting – see separate map and action plan	E1, E2	Ongoing	See woodland management				
Work with local colts football team to update two junior football pitches to meet current FA regulations	B2, B3	N/A	SADC				
Seek funding for skate park improvements	D1, D2	Ongoing	SADC				
Establish an SADC Facebook page	G2	N/A	SADC				



# Rothamsted Park

## Year 2 2018-19

- ANNUAL MANAGEMENT ACTIONS
- ☐ Play equipment inspections, repairs and service
  - ☐ Inspect paths and hardstanding, repair as required
  - ☐ Independant inspections of play area & skate park, carry out any improvements/repairs
  - ☐ Park 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
  - ☐ Carry out maintance on sports pitches
  - ☐ Address park flooding
  - ☐ Building maintenance as required
  - ☐ Level any new benches and provide a surfaced pad next to them to accommodate wheelchair/pushchairs

- ANNUAL MANAGEMENT ACTIONS CONTINUED
- ☐ Remove graffiti when required
  - ☐ Tree management - tree survey, vetran trees, planting schedule, formative pruning
  - ☐ Continue to support park ranger activities
  - ☐ Contribute to Rothamsted Park Committee Meetings
  - ☐ Liasie with other users - football clubs, lesiure centre, town council, ice cream concession
  - ☐ Investigate using Rothamsted Park as a filming location
  - ☐ Update the Parks' webpage when required
  - ☐ Address anti-social behaviour
  - ☐ Review and update annual action plans

Seek funding for skate park ☐

Work with local colts football team to update two junior pitches to meet with current FA regulations ☐

- ONE OFF ITEMS
- ☐ Update and distribute Park leaflet
  - ☐ Undertake a Park user survey
  - ☐ Establish An SADC Facebook page

SEE ALSO WOODLAND MANAGEMENT MAP



## 5.5 YEAR 3-5 ACTION PLAN 2019-22

Action	Obj. no:	When	Responsibility	Funding	Estimated cost	Spec. ref:	Status (completed/comments)
Install a trim trail	A4, F3	Year 3	SADC				
Develop skate boarding events	G1, G2	Year 3	SADC				
Create a tree trail with a QR code	G1, G2	Year 3	SADC				
Repaint youth shelter	B1, B2	Year 3	SADC				
Woodland management including tree planting – see separate map and action plan	E1, E2	Ongoing	See woodland management				



## ANNUAL MANAGEMENT ACTIONS

☐ Play equipment inspections, repairs and service  
☐ Inspect paths and hardstanding, repair as required  
☐ Independant inspections of play area & skate park, carry out any improvements/repairs  
☐ Park 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  
☐ Carry out maintance on sports pitches  
☐ Address park flooding  
☐ Building maintenance as required  
☐ Level any new benches and provide a surfaced pad next to them to accommodate wheelchair/pushchairs

## ANNUAL MANAGEMENT ACTIONS CONTINUED

☐ Remove graffiti when required  
☐ Tree management - tree survey, vetran trees, planting schedule, formative pruning  
☐ Continue to support park ranger activities  
☐ Contribute to Rothamsted Park Committee Meetings  
☐ Liasie with other users - football clubs, lesiure centre, town council, ice cream concession  
☐ Investigate using Rothamsted Park as a filming location  
☐ Update the Parks' webpage when required  
☐ Address anti-social behaviour  
☐ Review and update annual action plans

Repaint youth shelter

Develop skate boarding events

# Rothamsted Park Year 3-5 2019-22



## 6 APPENDICIES

### 6.1 CONTACTS

Organisation	Role	Contact Details	Phone/email
St Albans City & District Council	Owner	Phil Bruce-Green	01727 819329 Philip.Bruce-Green@stalbans.gov.uk
One Life	Sports centre and swimming pool	Main reception	01582 767722
John O'Conner Grounds Maintenance	Ground maintenance contractor park ranger	Customer care	01727 844638

## 6.2 SPECIES LIST & TREE PLANTING GUIDELINES

### Species List

Trees that are suitable for planting at Rothamsted Park include:

- Oak (*Quercus robur*) – replacement trees for the mature Oaks
- Lime (*Tilia x europaea*) – replacement trees for the avenue and
- Sweet Chestnut (*Castanea sativa*) – as replacement trees in some of the small woodland blocks

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.

### Where to Plant

Limes are to be planted as replacements for the exiting old lime trees along the avenue.

Oaks are to be planted as replacements for the existing older trees around the park and in the old hedgerows (see map).

### 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. Spread a lay of well rotten mulch (wood chip) around the base of the trees, 10-15cm deep; avoid direct contact with the base of the tree. This will help to retain moisture and stop the soil becoming compacted.

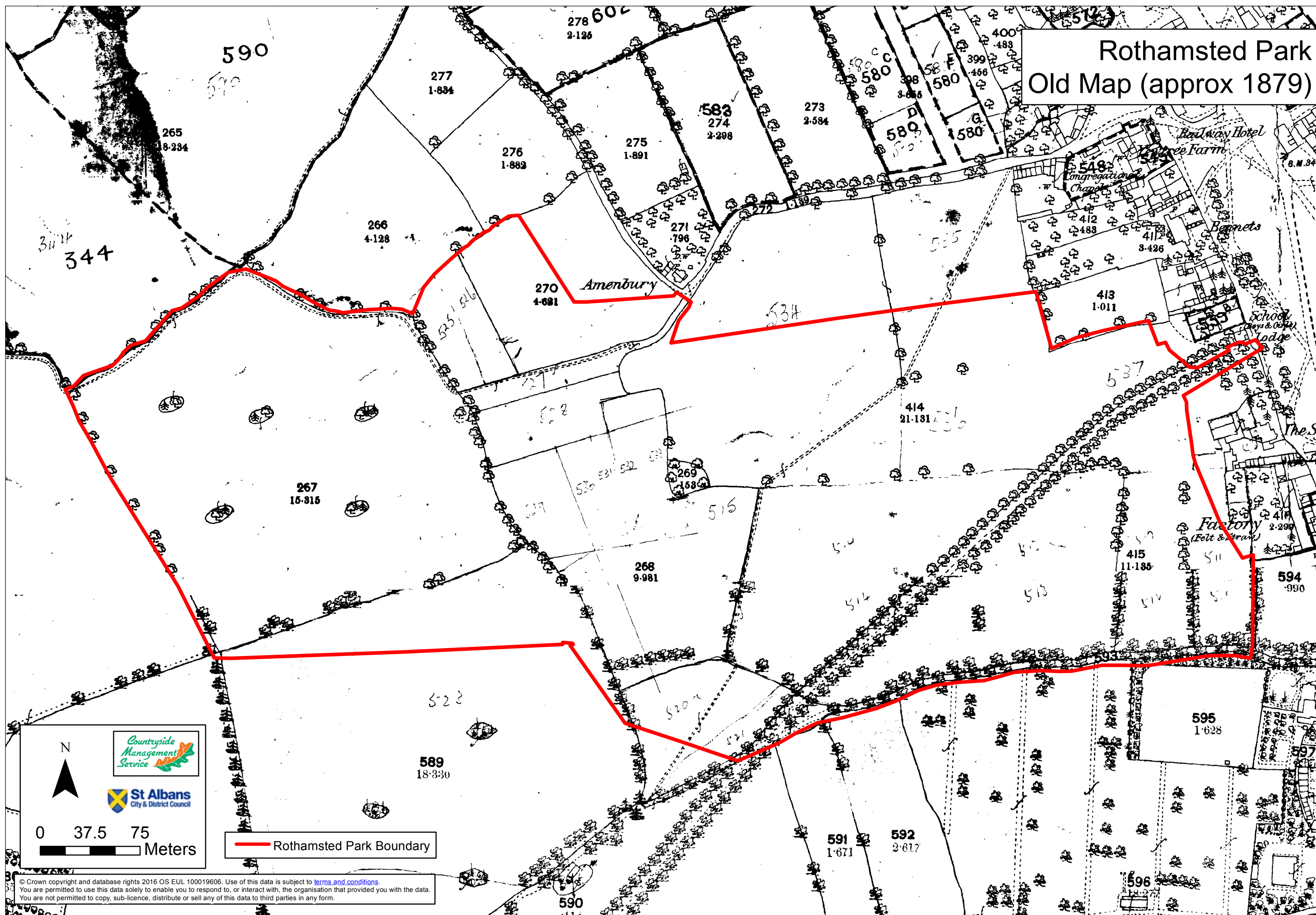
Trees should be staked by using one or two wooden tree stakes depending on tree size and secured using a suitable tree tie. The trees should be protected using a suitable tree guard to stop grazing animals such as rabbit and deer – clear spiral guards will protect from rabbits. If there are problems with the tree becoming damaged by strimming a stimmer guard can also be installed.

The trees should be watered regularly in the first year to establish the roots system. Do not over water as it can cause root rot. Place the watering device (a soaker ball, soaker hose, or a drip irrigation system) at least 10cm away from the tree and water young trees every other day in hot weather, decreasing to weekly in autumn and stopping over winter. After 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, checking stakes, ties and guards, removal of guards when trees are mature, formative pruning to promote good form.



# Rothamsted Park Old Map (approx 1879)



### 6.3 VETERAN TREE GUIDELINES

There are a large number of veteran trees - mainly Oak around the park, 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 and create aesthetically pleasing features within the Park. The area directly beneath the Oak trees should be included in the summer meadow area this will then incorporate any dropped limbs. Due to the location of the Lime trees next to the main avenue dead wood needs to be removed and any limb dropped from a veteran tree will probably need to be removed.

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 summer meadow.

The removal of any epicormic growth from the veteran trees should be continued. Any benches beneath the large trees should be removed to stop unnecessary pollarding of branches.