



Verulamium Park

Greenspace Action Plan

2017 - 2022



St Albans City and District Council
District Council Offices
St Peter's Street
St Albans
Herts
AL1 3JE
Tel: 01727 866100
Website: www.stalbans.gov.uk

Further copies of this management plan are available from:

Parks and Green Spaces
Community Services
St Albans City and District Council
District Council Offices
St Peter's Street
St Albans
Herts
AL1 3JE
Tel: 01727 819366

Email: greenspaces@stalbans.gov.uk

AMENDMENT DATE	SECTION UPDATED	DETAILS	OFFICER
15/1/19	Year 4	Updated the action plan	DF

CONTENTS

1. SITE SUMMARY	4
2. SITE DESCRIPTION	6
2.1 Location Map	6
2.2 Site Description Map	2
2.3 Constraints Map	3
2.4 Introduction	9
2.5 Geography & Landscape	9
2.6 History, Archaeology & Conservation	11
2.7 Habitats & Wildlife	21
2.8 Access, Facilities & Infrastructure	24
2.9 Community, Management & Events	34
3. ANALYSIS & EVALUATION	37
3.1 A Welcoming Place	37
3.2 Healthy, Safe & Secure	38
3.3 Clean & Well Maintained	39
3.4 Sustainability	40
3.5 Conservation & Heritage	40
3.6 Community Involvement	44
3.7 Marketing	45
4. AIMS & OBJECTIVES	48
A Welcoming Place	48
B Healthy, Safe & Secure	48
C Clean & Well Maintained	48
D Sustainability	48
E Conservation & Heritage	49
F Community Involvement	49
G Marketing	50
5. ACTION PLANS AND MAPS	51
6. SPECIFICATIONS	65
6.1 Signage and Interpretation	65
6.2 Furniture and Fittings	65
6.3 Gates and Fencing	67
6.4 Habitat and Vegetation Management	67
7. CONTACTS	69
8. APPENDICES	70

1. SITE SUMMARY

Name	Verulamium Park
Address	St Michael's Street St Albans AL3 4SW
Grid ref	TL137069
Size	66.9 ha
Owner	St Albans City & District Council
Designations	Scheduled Ancient Monument Local Wildlife Site Conservation Area Listed Buildings Metropolitan Green Belt

VISION STATEMENT

Verulamium Park is an irreplaceable resource of beauty and opportunity. The Park's many thousands of 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, while also enabling discovery and adventure.

The vision for management of the park will be for all parties linked to the park to work together, to ensure the successful integration of measures to protect and conserve the nationally significant historic assets with the enhancement of a well-loved local landscape and a rich and dynamic visitor experience.

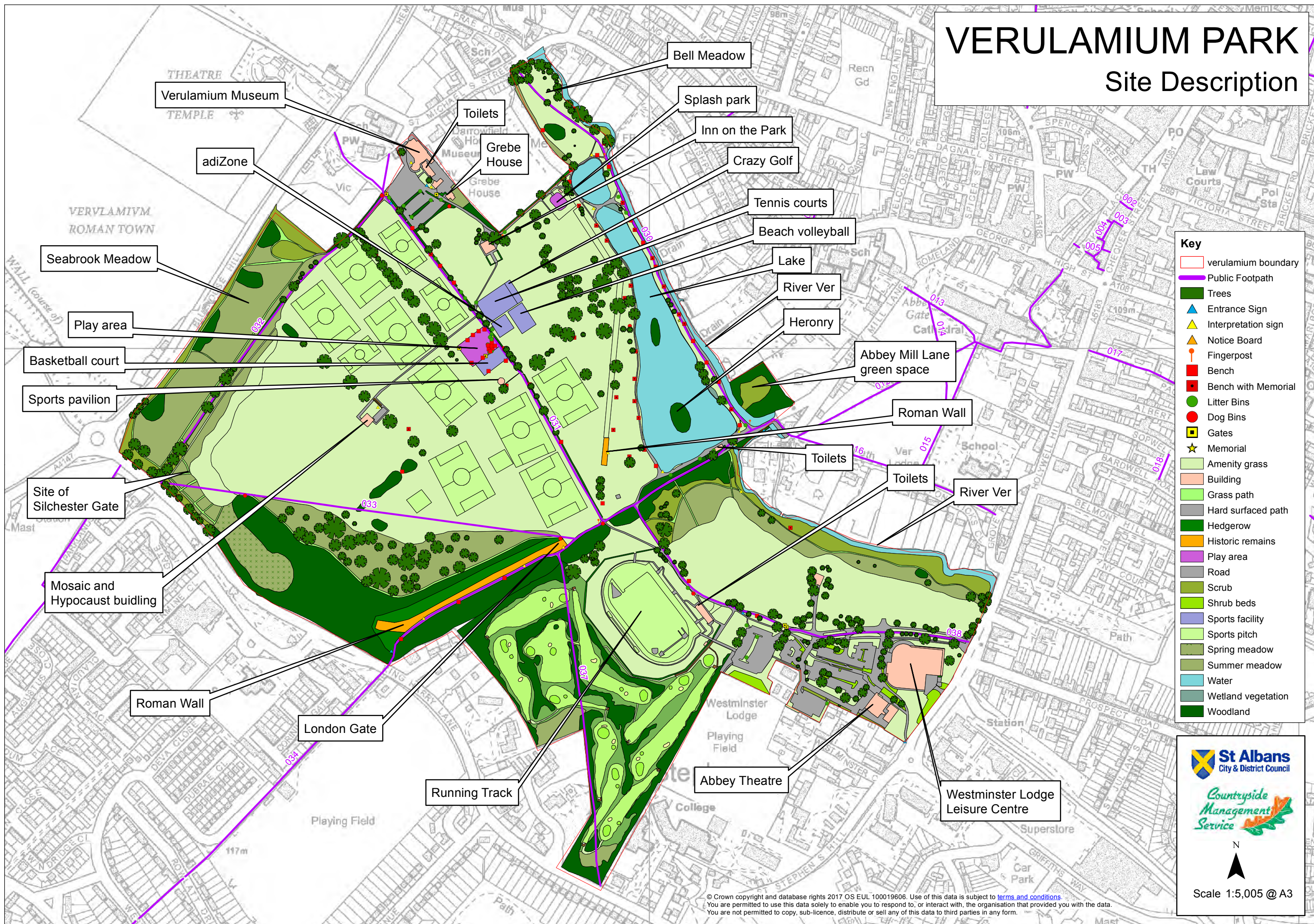
Our vision for Verulamium Park in 2022 is for:

- **a centre for the history and discovery of St Albans:** We will aim to make the most of this opportunity through the continued investigation and interpretation of the archaeological remains, coupled with improved educational resources.
- **a beautiful and varied landscape:** we will continue to manage and conserve the landscape character of the Park, and continue to develop its relationship to the wider landscape through activities such as opening up view points.
- **a welcoming and accessible Park:** we will make Verulamium Park a site that all people are able to access and WANT to access.
- **a site rich in biodiversity:** we aim to increase the biodiversity through improvement of existing habitats and creation of new.

- **a site offering a diversity of recreational opportunity:** recreation does not always sit comfortably with other uses and sensitivities of a site; however, we will continue to maintain and improve existing recreational facilities and look to offer new opportunities where need has been identified.
- **a strong identity:** we have established a 'brand' for the Park that is instantly recognisable to site visitors, and we will use this to guide partners in a coordinated approach to publicity and promotion.
- **bursting with communication:** in addition to all our many local site users, there are a large number of groups and organisations that have direct or indirect interest in the Park. We will strive to ensure effective dissemination of information and lines of communication through website updates, newsletters, regular meetings and consultation events.

VERULAMIUM PARK

Site Description



2.4 INTRODUCTION

Verulamium Park is located close to St Albans City Centre, in the middle of the District, and lies within the ward of Verulam. It covers an area of 66.9 hectares (165 acres), with many footpath links into the adjoining countryside. Two of its boundaries are major routes into the City i.e. Bluehouse Hill and King Harry Lane.

2.5 GEOGRAPHY & LANDSCAPE

2.5.1 LANDSCAPE

The Park has a country park feel with a number of distinctive areas. The formal area of the Park is centred on the main lake with its two islands and the heronry and the smaller boating lake. Both lakes are themselves surrounded by paths allowing visitors to stroll around the lakes admiring the wildlife.

Wide open spaces are broken by mature trees that mark the line of the original field boundaries. Today some of the meadows are named after the individual land owners from the past. There is a large area of woodland located to the southern side of the Park along the Roman ditch and City Walls.



Large areas of grass meadow dominate the Park, especially along its boundaries with Bluehouse Hill and King Harry Lane, from where spectacular views of the Park and Cathedral can be seen.



Formal use is concentrated along the central path that runs from east to west linking Holywell Hill and the village of St Michael's. With good access and regular supervision from the Park Ranger and Leisure Management Contract Staff, the Children's Play Area, adiZone and Toddlers Splash Park provide endless fun for visitors. The Inn on the Park, tennis, netball and basket ball facilities as well as the football pitches and cricket pitches are also found in this area. Located just off Holywell Hill is the Westminster Lodge Leisure Centre and Abbey View Golf Track Facility.

Almost all the Park is laid out on gentle sloping land, with gradients in several directions. This adds to the attractiveness of the landscape and allows for spectacular views of the Abbey and City.

2.5.2 DESIGNATIONS

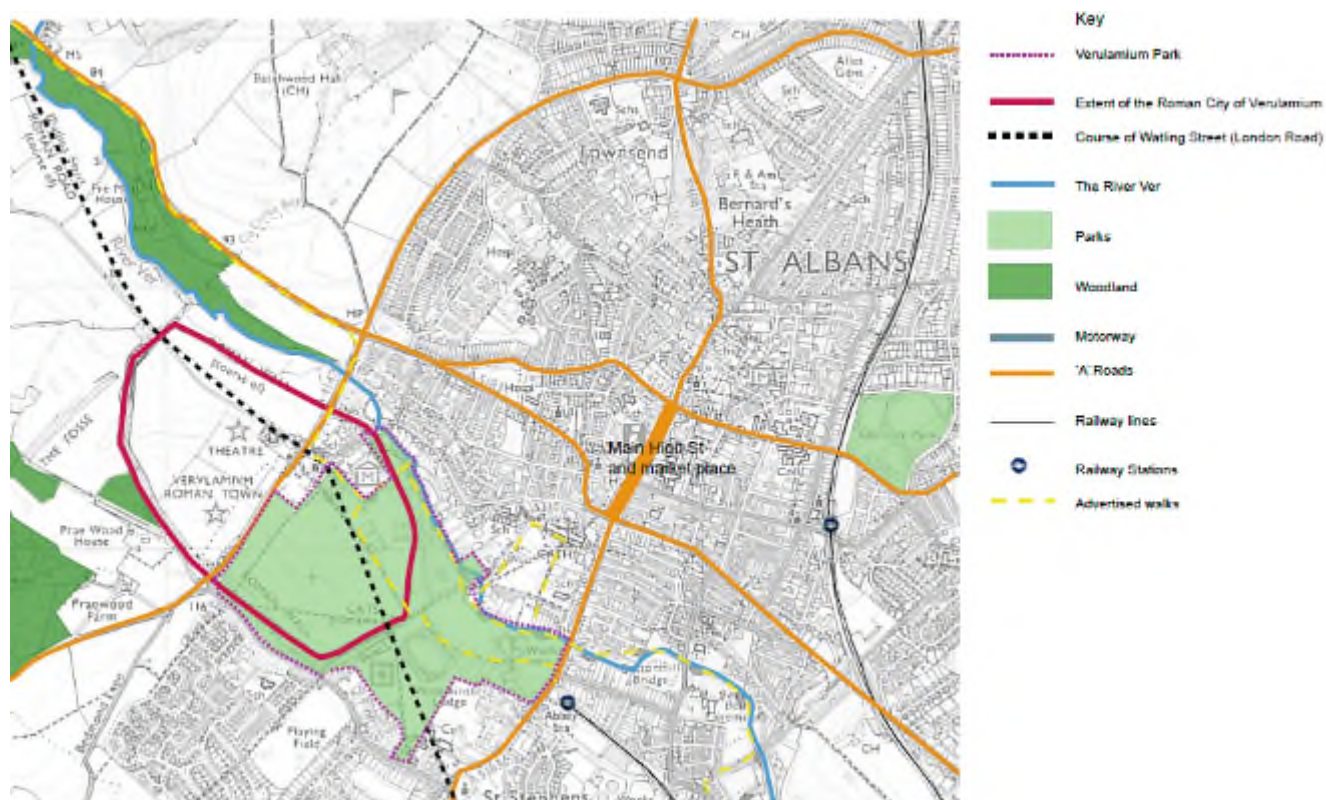
The Park is a complex site with a number of significant features within its archaeology, history, wildlife and landscape character. The intrinsic value of these features is preserved through legislation, which has a constraining influence on how the site is managed. Details of the conservation designations within the Park are listed in the table below, and where possible, annotated on the Constraints Plan.

Scale	Designation	Detail
National	Scheduled Ancient Monument (SAM)	The Roman City of Verulamium, which lies underneath part of the Park and countryside to the west, is a designated Scheduled Ancient Monument which provides legal protection against works that may damage the site.
	English Heritage Guardianship	The Roman Ditches and wall are of such significance that they are managed directly by English Heritage on behalf of the UK Government.
	Listed Buildings	There are numerous listed buildings, mostly around the north western fringes of the site. The constraints imposed by this designation also relate to the setting of the buildings in addition to preservation of their structure, and therefore has a bearing on any alterations to the surrounding landscape.
County	Local Wildlife Site	Verulamium Lakes and Abbey Mill Lane Area are both designated as County Wildlife Sites – areas of at least district importance that are considered to be of ‘critical natural capital’.
	Rights of Way	A number of public footpaths cross through Verulamium Park. The maintenance responsibility for these lies with Hertfordshire County Council.
District / Borough	Conservation area	The entire park falls within the conservation area for St Albans, a designation which seeks to preserve the character or appearance of a particularly valuable area.
	Metropolitan Green Belt	The entire Park falls within the Metropolitan Green Belt, designated under Section 9 of the National Planning Policy Framework, which restricts the growth of development in strategic rural areas on the edge of conurbations.
	Zones of Visibility	Policy 114 designates the southern end of the Park as a key viewpoint location to the centre of St Albans, and restricts any development within the town that would detract from this valuable asset.

2.6 HISTORY, ARCHAEOLOGY & CONSERVATION

2.6.1 CONTEXT

The most important aspect of Verulamium Park is its rich archaeological and historical heritage, documented through substantial excavation and archaeological work. This section provides a brief overview of the archaeology of the Park and a timeline showing various events throughout the Park's history.



Map showing the extent of the Roman City of Verulamium. Source St Albans City & District Council

Intensive development began in the Late Iron Age. Much of the excavated evidence is outside the Park boundaries (to the north in Prae Wood and to the south-west), but the focus is widely thought to have been a royal establishment in the valley bottom (centred on the area of St. Michael's church). Later Roman settlement began here on the site of a 'Central Enclosure' and went through a number of different construction phases until it became the third largest Roman city in Britain. The elements of the Roman city that are still visible today are sections of the city's defensive wall and ditch, a Roman mosaic floor and the Roman Theatre. Further buried Roman features – roads and buildings – can be seen as cropmarks in drought conditions, often seen at the end of the summer in the grass. The map above illustrates the known extent of the remains of the Roman City which lie beneath the Park and the adjacent area to the north-west of the site.

Following the decline of the Roman Empire, the area within the Park boundaries continued to be used, with a possible Saxon settlement centred on St. Michael's church. Some of the Roman buildings were certainly reused and a number of churches and chapels were established within or near the boundaries of the modern Park. The church

of St. Michaels still stands and demonstrates late Saxon and early Medieval features (including an important 14th century Doom painting).

The later town of St. Albans became established in Saxon times on higher land to the east. The area inside the Park boundary came to be used as agricultural land and as a source of building materials for the new buildings of the Norman Abbey. The Park area mainly remained in cultivation (with a small amount of settlement around St. Michaels Church) until it was bought by St. Albans City and District Council in 1929. A brief description of the development of the Park since then is provided below.

The majority of the Park is a Scheduled Monument, a designation which reflects the national significance of the buried and above-ground remains. Due to the importance and visibility of the archaeology in the Park, archaeology should be and is considered one of the most important aspects of the Park. Along with the excellent Museum it encourages visitors to experience the Park.

The area covered by park comprises some 50% of the Roman town of Verulamium, which extended to some 80ha by the late third century AD: the third largest in Roman Britain. After its decline and desertion, the chapels of SS Mary Magdalene and Germanus were established in medieval times. In the post-medieval period, most of the area was farmed from St Germain's farm (now the site of Verulamium Museum), and remained in agricultural use until 1929 when St Albans City and District Council acquired that part of the Roman town site to the east of Bluehouse Hill from the Earl of Verulam. The newly acquired land was to be used for a municipal park, and there seems to have been some idea of laying out some Roman buildings as part of the Park's attractions.

In the Roman period, after 43 AD, Verulamium developed into a major provincial town, and when the town walls were built in the third century, they enclosed a greater area than that of any other town walls in Britain with the exception of London and Cirencester. The precise status of Roman Verulamium has been the subject of much debate. Tacitus, writing at the end of the first century, describes the town as a municipium. Roman Verulamium was also the civitas, or tribal capital of the Catuvellauni. Under the Roman Empire the Catuvellauni controlled one of the most extensive and richest tribal territories in the province. Verulamium would therefore have been the centre of one of the richest areas in the province.

The following image shows the layout of the Roman City within the Park Boundary



*Map showing the layout of the Roman City of Verulamium within the park boundary.
Source St Albans City & District Council*

2.6.2 WHEELER EXCAVATIONS

On the 2nd August 1930, Sir Mortimer Wheeler and his first wife, Tessa, commenced a series of excavations in the Park. The Wheeler excavations mark a highly significant development, both in the understanding of Verulamium and in the evolution of Romano-British studies in the country generally. For the first time a programme of excavations was undertaken with the express aim, not simply of revealing buried structures, but in order to write the history of the Roman town.

Not surprisingly Wheeler's account of the history of Verulamium is a tremendous influence on Romano-British archaeology in the country as a whole. For at least 30 years after the close of the Wheeler campaign in 1934, the 'Wheeler model' coloured all interpretations of the town's past, and influenced a generation of British archaeologists.



2.6.3 UNIVERSITY COLLEGE LONDON – SENSING THE IRON AGE AND ROMAN PAST: GEOPHYSICS AND THE LANDSCAPE OF HERTFORDSHIRE

This project is a collaboration between the Institute of Archaeology, UCL and a number of local heritage groups, including the St Albans and Hertfordshire Architectural and Archaeological Society, the Berkhamsted and District Archaeological Society, the West

Essex Archaeological Group, St Albans Museum Service and St Albans City & District Council.

The aim of the project is to conduct archaeological surveys on a number of Late Iron Age and Roman sites throughout Hertfordshire, including Verulamium.

The project uses magnetometry, the technique of measuring and mapping patterns of magnetism in the soil. Ancient activity, particularly burning, leaves magnetic traces that show up even today when detected with the right equipment.

To date the team have captured a vast quantity of data and have identified previously unknown structures in the park. This data is currently being analysed and, once complete, will be written up into a report. Below is a selection of the results and related photos.



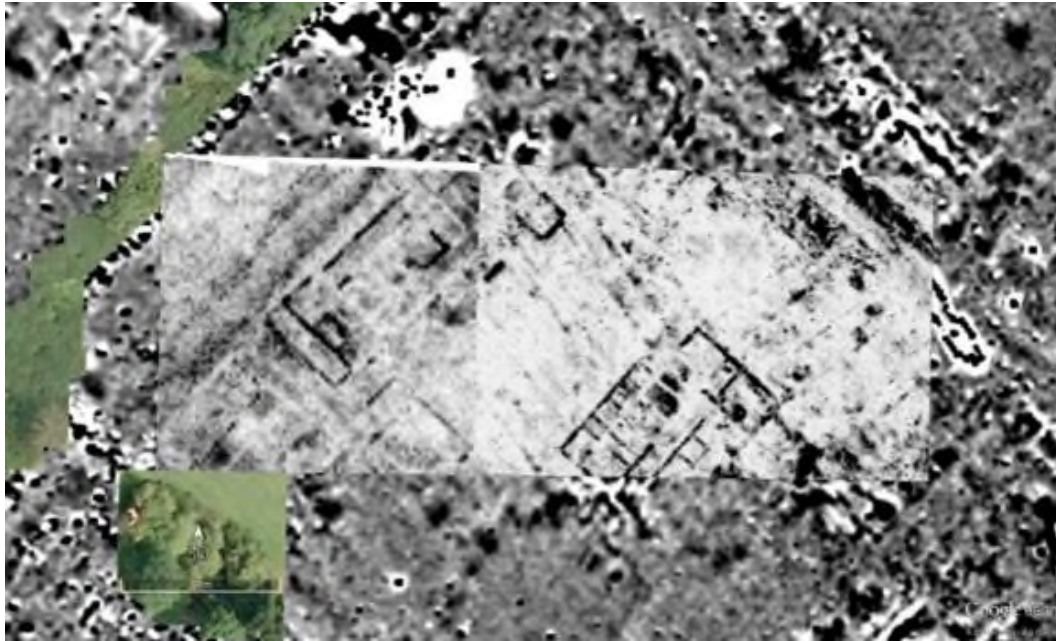
The team with the then Mayor of St Albans Cllr Annie Brewster and the magnetometer



The magnetometer in use



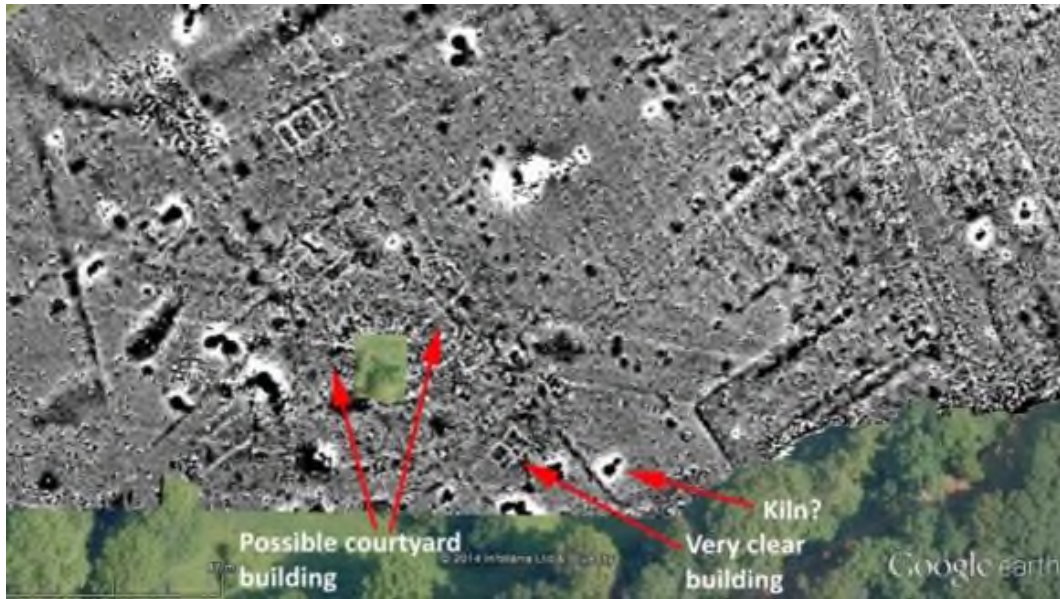
Magnetometry result from the Park



The layout of Roman building can be clearly seen



The survey has also helped us to identify the positions and routes of water mains, seen in the middle of this image. The 8" gas main can also be clearly seen to the right, running under the the footpath.



2.6.4 ACQUISITION OF THE PARK BY THE COUNCIL

Much of land that is now Verulamium Park was divided in two and was occupied by two farms, St Germain's Farm and Verulam Farm

On the 18th January 1928 the strip of land adjacent to River Ver was conveyed to the Council by WNW Gape and others. On the 2^d August 1929 St Germain's Farm & Verulam Woods was conveyed to the Council by The Right Honourable James Walter 4th Earl of Verulam and others.

The now Bell Meadow was conveyed to the Council by WNW Gape and others on the 29th January 1934. On the 17th December 1956 the former Abbey Mill Cottage was conveyed to the Council by The Society of the Faith. What is now known as Seabrook Meadow along Bluehouse Hill was conveyed to the Council by The Earl of Verulam and Gorhambury Estates Company on the 25th March 1958.



The lake under construction c 1931

2.7.4 CHRONOLOGY

A brief timeline of the archaeology and history of the Park is provided here as an introduction.

Late Pre-Roman Iron Age

BC 50 – AD 43+ Settlement in the surrounding area of the Park during this period becomes more intense, with excavated evidence in the area of Folly Lane and Prae Wood (to the west of the current Park), but the focus is widely thought to have been a royal establishment in the valley bottom (centred around the area of St. Michaels church). The settlement is known as Verlamion and was the capital of the Catuvellauni tribe. It was established by their leader, Tasciovanus and was one of the first places in Britain to be recorded by name.

Roman

AD 50+ the first phase of the Roman town is constructed within the valley bottom and is centred on the Late Iron Age central enclosure. Verulamium was granted the rank of *municipium* meaning that its citizens had a degree of self-government.

AD 61 According to a Latin text, Verulamium was razed to the ground during the Boudiccan uprising. However, only seven structures within the town show evidence of destruction or burning around this time. It is therefore unclear exactly how much of a setback to the town's development the Boudiccan revolt really was.

c.AD 70 – 100 – Building works following the Boudiccan revolt result in a new Basilica being dedicated in AD 79. The road network, drainage and water supply are all in place by AD 100.

AD 117 –138 – The London and Chester Gates on Watling Street into are constructed.

AD 150 –160 a fire devastated Verulamium, and whilst it did not destroy the entire city the Forum and Basilica were razed to the ground along with the Macellum, the public baths and a number of the workshops in the Insulae surrounding the Forum/Basilica complex.

Third century AD Alban, a citizen of Verulamium is said to have been executed, becoming the first Christian martyr in Britain.

Late Roman period

AD 200 – 400 – The circuit of the town walls was constructed. In order to build the north-eastern stretch of wall it was necessary to drain the marshy area and canalise the Ver. The smaller gates including the Silchester gate were constructed.

410-700 – The Roman occupation of Britain formally ends in AD 410. It is claimed that building development continued into the fifth century AD but this is not universally accepted. The town certainly may have fallen into decline from the middle of the 5th century onwards. At the end of the seventh century King Offa founded the first Abbey, on the supposed location of Albans martyrdom.

Post Roman

700 – 1200 – Later evidence seems to suggest that a royal Saxon *burh* could have been established around the previous Forum and Basilica. Much of the Roman town was robbed and incorporated into the later Romanesque Abbey, founded after the Norman Conquest (now part of St Albans Abbey and Cathedral).

St. Michael's Church is built on the site of the Roman Forum and a small village grows up around it. St. Mary Magdalen Chapel and St. Germain's Chapel are both constructed. The fishpool is drained and the remains of Verulamium within the current Park boundaries are used as source for building materials, mainly for the Norman Abbey (1070s).

1200 – 1900 – settlement continues around St. Michael's church. The majority of the Park served as agricultural land and the river and mill stream were used for a series of mills.

1847 – R. Grove Lowe excavates the Theatre (just outside the current Park boundary). This is the first formal archaeological excavation in the Roman town.

1929 – The area of the Park is bought from the Earl of Verulam by the then City Council and construction of the lakes commences.

1930's Intensive archaeological excavations of the Roman town led by Mortimer and Tessa Wheeler

1938 – Construction of the Verulamium Museum

1930s and 40s – Construction of park café, sports courts, changing rooms, cricket pavilion, and paddling pool.

1950 – Verulamium's national and international significance was recognised and the site was first listed as a Scheduled Ancient Monument by the UK Government

1950 – The Roman Walls, Ditches and other significant area of the park were placed within the Guardianship of English Heritages

1967 – Construction of Abbey Theatre

1970 – Construction of Westminster Lodge Leisure Centre and Track Facilities and opened to the public in 1971

1970s – Relocation of Grebe House from Watford to Verulamium Park and use as head offices for Herts & Middlesex Wildlife Trust

1987 – Aqua Zooms were installed at Westminster Lodge

1988 – Redevelopment of Athletics track surface

1990 – Redevelopment of the Pitch and Put the 9 Hole Abbey View golf Course

1994 – Redevelopment of Westminster Lodge and the Track associated changing rooms and clubhouse facilities

1998 – Extension to Verulamium Museum

2004 – Construction of new building around the in situ Roman Mosaic

2005 – Construction of Splash park on site of former paddling pool

2010 – Construction of the New Westminster Lodge Leisure Centre

2011 – Installation of the AdiZone outdoor Gym London 2012 Legacy project

2012 – The old Westminster Lodge leisure centre closed its doors and was demolished to make way for a new car park

2013 – Construction of the Sand Courts started. The sand was given to the City by the London organising committee as a London 2012 legacy project.

2015 – Completion of the St Albans Green Ring cycle network

2.7.5 CONSERVATION

St Albans Museums consists of two museums, the Museum of St Albans and Verulamium Museum. Verulamium Museum was established as the site museum of Iron Age and Roman Verulamium during the 1930s, following the archaeological excavations by Mortimer and Tessa Wheeler. It holds most of the excavated material discovered in the City and District of St Albans.

The museum's collections consists of approximately 80,000 objects and specimens which range from fossils and archaeological remains to archives such as maps, prints, drawings, photographs and ephemera associated with St Albans and its people.

2.7 HABITATS & WILDLIFE

The Park has significant ecological value, containing a variety of habitats that support a wide diversity of species, some protected by legislation. It also has value through being a large green space on the edge of a dense urban area and adjacent to the wider countryside, with key ecological links such as the River Ver.

The Park's significant habitats and species are described in the following paragraphs:

2.7.1 GRASSLAND

A significant proportion of the Park is given to amenity grassland, which developed from former arable land in the latter half of the 20th century. The closely-mown sward is generally species poor and of little wildlife value, but provides a valuable resource for formal and informal recreation.

Some areas, such as the west side of the site along Blue House Hill known as Seabrook Field are managed specifically as wild flower meadow, and have a more relaxed mowing regime, resulting in swathes of Lowland Meadow. These grassland areas are of greater ecological value, with a wider diversity of plant species, providing suitable habitat for reptiles, invertebrates and foraging birds.

2.7.6 TREES AND WOODLAND

For such a large site, the Park has fairly limited woodland and tree cover, which makes existing woodland highly important to the park as a whole. The site does not have an historic legacy of woodland. The existing woodlands and trees are either remnant field boundary tree lines or areas of the Park that have not been intensively used or managed allowing for succession.

Tree stock across the Park comprises hornbeam, oak, lime, horse chestnut, willow, field maple and sycamore. In the parkland areas of the site, the mature and semi-mature trees are particularly significant to the character and appearance of the landscape. Many of these trees have veteran features that provide a suitable habitat for bats, hole nesting birds and invertebrates. Appropriate protection needs to be afforded to these important habitats. As and where mature trees die, these will be retained as standing deadwood where this does not cause safety concerns or has a detrimental impact upon the landscape.

The main areas of woodland and scrub are located around the Roman Wall, along the boundary with King Harry Lane and parts of the River Ver including the Abbey Mill Lane greenspace area. In addition to the canopy species, the shrub understory consists predominantly of hawthorn, elder, and hazel. Ground flora is limited in places, such as the Verulamium Hills area of the site, where the canopy cover is quite dense.

2.7.7 SCRUB AND RUDERAL VEGETATION

The Park contains some areas of scrub and tall ruderal (i.e. plants growing in wasteland or disturbed land) vegetation along the River Ver and Seabrook Field. These areas are not subject to intensive management, allowing the growth of species such as bramble, nettle, and hogweed, with occasional shrubs. These areas have ecological value for foraging wildlife, and provide especially good habitat for reptiles such as grass snake and common lizard, particularly along the River Ver.

2.7.8 HEDGEROWS

There are a number of managed, predominantly single-species hedgerows across the Park. The largest is the hawthorn hedge that follows a main footpath diagonally across the centre of the Park. These hedgerows are regularly clipped to maintain a box-like appearance, and are of fairly limited ecological value.

In comparison, the hedgerows that exist in the Park in Seabrook Meadow are far more ecologically valuable. They offer more foraging opportunities and provide potential nesting sites for small birds.

2.7.9 LAKES

The lakes comprise two bodies of water, one a great deal larger than the other. Construction started on both lakes in September 1930 and was completed in February 1932. The lakes comprise of a concrete edging and bases, no more than 1m deep. The larger of the lakes contains two wooded islands, one of which supports a heronry. The lakes are surrounded by amenity grass and/or surfaced footpath. The marginal or semi-aquatic vegetation is limited to the northern end of the large lake.

The lakes support a large population of waterfowl, maintained and increased through the popularity of feeding by visitors. This has resulted in a great input of nutrient-rich bird droppings leading to a highly eutrophic, heavily silted water body. This is being addressed through a range of measures. The district council is working with the Inn on the Park to stop the sale of bird food (for feeding the water fowl) to the public and a PR campaign is in place including on-site signage to deter people from feeding of the birds.

The lakes are fed by the River Ver through a sluice. This sluice has a restriction plate fitted and does not allow water to pass through during low river levels. In addition the extraction of water from the River Ver is licensed by the Environment Agency.

2.7.10 RIVER VER

The Ver is a chalk river, sourced from an aquifer located near Markyate in Hertfordshire. Chalk rivers are rare and ecologically valuable, providing good habitat for fish and invertebrates.

The River was originally canalised by the Romans in the 3^d Century AD providing power to the mills right up until the Victorian period.

The northern and southern sections of the river have, in places, typical chalk river qualities with fairly rapid flow and clear water allowing clarity to a relatively un-silted river bottom which is beneficial for aquatic plants and wildlife. In contrast, the canalized

section alongside the lakes has very low flow, resulting in deposition of silt and very poor clarity. This section and others through the course are also affected by dense tree canopy. The heavy shade and siltation provides poor conditions for wildlife.

2.7.11 BIRDS

Verulamium Park is recognised as a valuable site for its bird populations, with RSPB surveys recording 64 species in 2010. The lakes and the River Ver both form significant habitats for wetland birds, particularly for waterfowl. There is also value in the expanse of parkland and more wooded areas around the Roman Wall.

The Heronry, sited on the southernmost island in the lower lake, is the most significant bird-related feature. This is designated a Local Wildlife Site and currently supports 6-7 breeding pairs of Grey Heron. Aside from their ecological significance, the herons are an important part of the Park's visitor experience, with the RSPB operating a viewpoint close to the heronry during the breeding season. In 2012 a remote camera was installed on the Island to enable visitors to view the nesting bird at the RSPB visitor station. This has been continued by local volunteers.

In addition to the heron's, since 2014 Little Egrets have been breeding here. In that year there were four egret chicks in one nest, in 2015 there were a total of five in two nests and the same number in 2016.

The water bodies support a large diversity of waterfowl, including mallard tufted duck, shoveler, coot and moorhen. They are also important foraging habitat for other species of bird, such as swallow and kingfisher.

The wider Park is populated by a variety of typical parkland birds, such as green woodpecker, mistle thrush and little owl. Other birds of prey can often be spotted across the Park, including red kite, sparrow hawk, and common buzzard.

2.7.12 REPTILES & AMPHIBIANS

Swathes of scrub and ruderal vegetation along the banks of the River Ver provide suitable habitats for reptiles and amphibians. In the past, grass snake has been recorded in the Park, and slow worm is known to be present in the surrounding area. Great crested newts have not been identified on site, but have been recorded as little as 300m to the south east.

2.7.13 MAMMALS

The Park has some ecological value for supporting a number of rare and protected bat species. The water bodies, meadows and wooded margins provide good foraging habitat. The River Ver works as a green corridor for bats (noctules, pipistrelles and Daubenton's). There have also been records of brown long-eared and whiskered bat. It is not known exactly where the roosts are, but some are likely to be in trees and buildings within the Park. Daubenton's, for example, generally choose roosts close to water bodies.

Water vole is a protected species within the UK, and in the past has been known to be present along the River Ver. Records exist for the species within the vicinity of the Park,

and it may well occur in the more naturalised stretches of the River, or more likely use it to travel between more attractive habitats. The River Ver and any potential habitat enhancements will be considered under the separate river project.

The 2007 ecological survey of the Park did not identify the presence of badger. However it did mention the recorded presence of badger in the area and the suitability of the Park as foraging habitat. The Verulamium Hills and the woodland walk could potentially be suitable locations for setts.

Common mammals are also found within the Park, such as fox, rat and rabbit.

2.7.14 INSECTS

The Park has many habitats suitable for supporting a variety of insect populations. The most notable species thought to be present, although not actually recorded on site, is stag beetle. This is a European Protected Species.

2.8 ACCESS, FACILITIES & INFRASTRUCTURE

2.8.1 ACCESS AND CIRCULATION

The Park can be accessed by road, foot and by public transport. It is well connected to a network of roads and footpaths that pass around the Park including Bluehouse Hill, Fishpool Street, King Harry Lane, Holywell Hill, St Michael's Street. In addition it has good links to both the M1 and M25.

There are two railway stations in St Albans; St Albans City Station in the City Centre is on the mainline in to London St Pancras International, and the Abbey Station is just outside the Park entrance on Holywell Hill and links to Watford Junction Railway Station and then on to London Euston.

The Green Ring Cycle route around St Albans runs through Verulamium Park. This connects with the Alban Way Cycle Path on Cottonmill Lane to the south east, linking St Albans with Hatfield, and with the Ver Valley Walk that follows the River Ver through the Park.

2.8.2 SITE ENTRANCES

There are a number of key entrances to the Park:

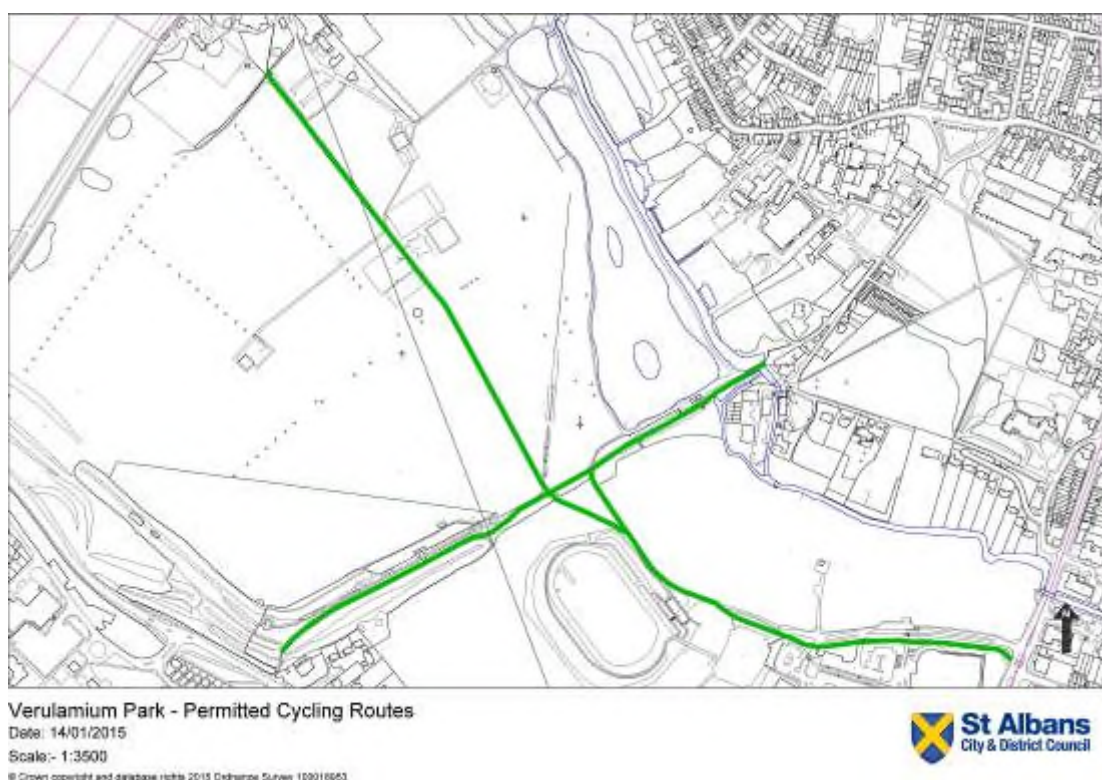
- Off Holywell Hill – Westminster Lodge Leisure Centre (footpath 38)
- Off King Harry Lane – beside the Roman Wall (footpath 37)
- Off King Harry Lane – beside the pedestrian crossing near the Silchester Gate (footpaths 32 & 34)
- Through St Michael's Churchyard (footpaths 31 & 32)
- Abbey Mill Lane (footpath 34)
- St Michael's Street at the River Ver (footpath 30)
- St Michael's Street at St Michael's School

In addition to these entrances, there is an informal entrance located on King Harry Lane next to the lay-by for parking and pedestrian crossing. The Council plans, subject to English Heritage approval, to create a new formal entrance with a new vehicle and pedestrian gated access.

The Park is not locked over night, though gates and bollards have been installed at the main entrances to prevent unauthorised vehicle access

2.8.3 CYCLE ROUTES

Permissive cycle routes cross the Park from North to South, linking key green transport links within the City, and from East to West, between Westminster Lodge Sports Centre and Verulamium Museum. This east to west route is part of the St Albans Green Ring. These tarmacked routes are shown on the plan below:



Map showing permitted cycle routes through Verulamium Park. Source St Albans City & District Council

2.8.4 CAR PARKS & CYCLE RACKS

There are two car parks located within the Park boundaries, sited next to Westminster Lodge Leisure Centre at Holywell Hill and at Verulamium Museum off St Michael's Street. In addition, there are also a number of other car parks located within walking distance in the City Centre. More information can be found here:

www.stalbans.gov.uk/parking

There are more than 50 'Sheffield' cycle racks outside of Westminster Lodge and a further three outside the Verulamium Museum.

Consideration will be given in this management plan to the installation of further cycle racks at destination points along the designated cycle routes, such as the Verulamium Museum, beside the sports facilities and Inn on the Park and by the running track.

2.8.5 FEATURES & FACILITIES

Roman Mosaic & Hypocaust

A Roman Mosaic and Hypocaust can be found within the Park. Housed within a purpose-built viewing building, the 1800 year old hypocaust, a Roman under-floor heating system, and its covering mosaic floor were uncovered during the Wheeler excavations. They stand in their original Roman location where they formed part of the reception and meeting rooms of a large town house. Entry is free. <http://www.stalbansmuseums.org.uk/hypocaust/>



Verulamium Museum

On the west gateway to the Park, Verulamium Museum is a fantastic place to find out about everyday Roman life. Being built on the site of one of the largest Roman settlements in Britain, you can also explore the remains of the Roman town as well as seeing a museum packed with Roman objects, The Museum depicts everyday life in Roman Britain and inside visitors will find:

- Recreated Roman rooms and hands-on Discovery Areas
- A video presentation about the excavations
- The Sandridge Hoard – a collection of roman gold coins
- Some of the finest Roman mosaics and wall plasters outside the Mediterranean

<http://www.stalbansmuseums.org.uk/verulamium/>

Toddlers Splash Park

The former Paddling Pool was re-developed into the new Toddlers Splash Park and installed over the original pool to protect the buried archaeological remains. It is made up of approximately 12 high and low water features inserted into the surface and is open from the 1st bank holiday in May through to the 2nd Sunday in September each year.



Play Area

This is located at the centre of the Park and is one of the District's largest play areas. It includes swings, slides, rocking play items and climbing frames.

Crazy Golf

The 12-hole crazy golf course is located adjacent to the tennis and netball courts and is open all year round. Balls and clubs can be hired from Abbey View Golf and Track.

Inn on the Park

The Inn on the Park Café is open year-round, seven days a week serving freshly made food to eat in or take away. The Inn on the Park was voted by the residents of the District as “The Family Friendly Restaurant of the year 2011” in the St Albans Food and Drink Awards

Abbey Theatre

The Company of Ten was formed in 1934 by 10 young people who had the enthusiasm to set up a drama group, and the determination to stage performances of a professional standard. The number of people involved grew quickly after that.

There are 10 ‘Company of Ten’ plays performed each year at the theatre, as well as a range of outside events such as teenage musicals, operas and one-person shows. These involve members of the community from all ages and backgrounds.

The current theatre is located within the park. The theatre is currently developing plans to extend the building, transforming it into a community arts hub.

Abbey Mill Lane greenspace

This area of trees and grassland is separated from the Park by the River Ver, The hillside rises up quite steeply here offering potential views across the wider Park, currently obscured by trees and scrub. There is currently no access. Under this plan the area is being brought into management with a view to integrating it into the main Park whilst retaining its more sheltered and informal nature.

2.8.6 SPORTS FACILITIES

AdiZone

The adiZone is a giant outdoor gym located within the Park and was officially opened by Team GB Gymnast Daniel Keatings in 2010. It was co-funded by St Albans City and District Council along with adidas and The Great Outdoor Gym Company. It brings a little piece of the London 2012 Games to St Albans. The adiZone is designed to enable and inspire local people to take part in more physical activities encouraging them to play a variety of sports. There is a wide range of equipment which includes football and basketball on the multi-games area and easy-to-use resistance gym equipment as well as a climbing wall.

Beach Court

Verulamium Park is one of six venues to gain a new beach volleyball court after the London 2012 Olympic Games. The sand was taken directly from Horse Guards Parade and the training courts in St James’ Park.

Over 700 tonnes of sand was donated by The London 2012 Organising Committee and the project was funded by Sport England. The investment forms part of Volleyball England’s grassroots Go Spike campaign which is aimed at increasing participation in volleyball by creating more volleyball and beach volleyball facilities and running free ‘come and try’ taster sessions across the country.

In 2014 Abbey View Golf and Track began managing the bookings for the beach court. The courts are well used and are priced at £5 per court, per hour.



Westminster Lodge Leisure Centre

Westminster Lodge Leisure Centre opened to the Public on the 10th November 2012. This state of the art facility offers a wide range of activities including: swimming, gym, fitness classes, Verulamium Spa, sports hall, climbing wall and much more.

The centre's business plan has been successful in many ways but ultimately the brand has got bigger, becoming very well known within the community, and been successful in encouraging people to be more active, more often. Since opening, the centre has received nearly 3 million visitors and seen an 8% increase year on year in attendance levels.

Sports Courts

The hard surface sports courts are located adjacent to the play area and they include tennis courts / netball courts and a basket ball / netball court.

Athletics Track and Abbey View 9-Hole Golf Course

The golf course is open to all on a pay and play basis all year round. The facility was established in 1990 and has been growing ever since. The centre also includes a 400m running track and associated athletics facilities, changing rooms, pro shop, club room, football pitch, putting green and a golf practice net.

Football Pitches

There are 12 senior and 3 junior football pitches in the Park, all of which are available for hire during the football season. Bookings can be made via the Council's Grounds Maintenance Contractor John O'Conner Ltd on their website www.johnoconner.co.uk or by calling them on 0800 3457405.

Cricket Pitches

There are 2 cricket pitches and a cricket pavilion in the Park, both of which are available for hire during the cricket season. Bookings can be made via the Council's Grounds

Maintenance Contractor John O' Conner Ltd on their website www.johnoconner.co.uk or by calling free on 0800 3457405.

Sports Pavilions

The Park benefits from 2 sports pavilions. St Michael's Changing Room, located in the car park next to the Museum offers a number of rooms for teams to change in as well as, showering facilities. This is also the location of one of the Parks three public toilet facilities. The Cricket Pavilion is located adjacent to the children's play area and offers a small kitchen, toilet and changing rooms as well as a main hall. The hall is used week days during school term times by school groups to have their lunch during visits the Museum, Park and Abbey.

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 purchased for a small fee from Westminster Lodge Leisure Centre.

2.8.7 PARK FURNITURE

Benches

There are approximately 80 benches in the Park, most of which are located around the lake and along the central path running east to west. Large proportions of them are Memorial Benches. The Council, over a period of time, is standardising the styles of Park furniture used within the Park and has chosen a bench style called Stanford for the formal areas and a rustic style for the less formal areas. The Council will be working with English Heritage to agree new positions in the less formal areas of the Park, and reposition a number of benches currently located within the guardianship areas where erosion is damaging buried archaeological remains. Discussions will also be held with the Verulamium Consultative Forum about the most appropriate locations.

Litter Bins

There are approximately 53 litter bins and 13 dog waste bins located at various points within the Park. Each of them is checked regularly throughout the day and emptied as and when needed as specified in the grounds maintenance specification.

2.8.8 SIGNAGE AND INTERPRETATION

In 2014 the first phase of the signage and interpretation project was completed and saw the installation of 10 brand new welcome boards and 8 new directional finger posts. The new signage is aimed at providing visitors with clear directional information about the Park and the surrounding area.



Phase two of the project was completed in 2015, with new interpretation boards which make the cultural and natural heritage of Verulamium Park more accessible and engaging to the many thousands of visitors that visit the Park each year.

2.8.9 PUBLIC CONVENIENCES

There are three public toilets, at:

- St Michael's at the museum entrance
- The Causeway
- Running Track

These toilets are open daily from dawn to dusk throughout the year and are cleaned by the Council's cleansing contractor.

2.8.10 BUILDINGS & STRUCTURES

There are a number of buildings situated within the Park. Some of these are managed directly by the Council whilst others are leased to individuals or organisations or are privately owned. The details are shown in the following table:

Name	Location	Occupancy / Use	Who Maintains it?
Westminster Lodge Leisure Centre	Off Mud Lane, near Holywell Hill	Owned by SADC and managed through the Leisure Management Contract	Sports and Leisure Management Ltd (SLM) are responsible for all maintenance requirements.
Abbey View Golf and Track	Off Mud Lane, near Holywell Hill	Owned by SADC and managed through the Leisure Management Contract	1Life – Abbey View Golf and Track

Name	Location	Occupancy / Use	Who Maintains it?
Inn on the Park	Within the Park near the Toddlers' Splash Park	Owned by SADC and leased to Inn on the Park (St Albans) Ltd	Inn in the Park (St Albans Ltd)
adiZone	Centre of the Park near the Play Area	Owned by SADC and maintained by the Grounds Maintenance Contractor	John O'Conner Ltd
Beach Courts	Centre of the Park near the Play Area	Owned by SADC. Bookings are managed through the Leisure Management Contractor 1Life	John O'Conner Ltd
Toddlers Splash Park	Centre of the Park near the Play Area	Owned by SADC and managed through the Leisure Management Contractor 1Life	1Life – Abbey View Golf and Track
Children's Play Area	Centre of the Park near the adiZone	Owned by SADC and maintained by the Grounds Maintenance Contractor	John O'Conner Ltd
Hard Surface Sports courts	Centre of the Park near the Play Area	Owned by SADC and managed through the Leisure Management Contract	1Life – Abbey View Golf and Track
Causeway Toilets Facility	At the southern end of the lake	Owned by SADC and cleaned by the Councils Cleansing Contractor	St Albans City and District Council
St Michael's Pavilion and Toilet Facility	Car Park at St Michael's	Owned by SADC and cleaned by the Councils Cleansing Contractor	St Albans City and District Council
Running Track Toilet facility	At the Golf and Track Facility	Owned by SADC and cleaned by the Councils Cleansing Contractor	St Albans City and District Council
Grebe House	Car Park at St Michael's	The land is owned by SADC; a lease arrangement is in place and the building is owned by the Herts and Middlesex Wildlife Trust	Herts and Middlesex Wildlife Trust
Verulamium Museum	Car Park at St Michael's	The building is owned and managed by SADC	St Albans City and District Council – Museum Services

Name	Location	Occupancy / Use	Who Maintains it?
Roman Mosaic / Hypocaust Building	Within the Park near the Children's Play Area	The building is owned and managed by SADC	St Albans City and District Council – Museum Services
English Heritage Guardianship SAM Area	Within the Park around the exposed Roman City wall and ditch	The land is owned by SADC but there is a guardianship agreement between the Council and English Heritage	Maintenance and preservation of features and archaeological remains is the responsibility of English Heritage
Air Cadets' Hut	Adjacent to Westminster Lodge	The land is owned by SADC and a ground lease arrangement is in place. The building is owned by the Air Cadets	St Albans Air Cadets
Sea Cadets' Hut	Within the car park at Westminster Lodge	The land is owned by SADC and a ground lease arrangement is in place. The building is owned by the Sea Cadets	St Albans Sea Cadets
Abbey Theatre	Within the car park at Westminster Lodge	The land is owned by SADC and a ground lease arrangement is in place. The building is owned by the Theatre Trust	Abbey Theatre Trust
Cricket Pavilion	In the middle of the Park near the Play Area	The building is owned by SADC and managed by the Grounds Maintenance Contractor.	St Albans City and District Council
Pumping Station	In the middle of the meadow in front of Westminster Lodge	Affinity Water owns the freehold of the land and building.	Affinity Water

As part of updating its Asset Register the Council has carried out a condition survey on all the Parks buildings owned and maintained by it.

See Appendices for further information about facilities that are managed by the Council.

2.8.11 LEASES & ARRANGEMENTS

The management and development of the Park needs to take into account a number of contract lease agreements between the Council and various stakeholder groups. These include:

Leisure Management Contracts

The Council's Leisure Management Contracts includes the operation and management of the Westminster Lodge Leisure Centre and the Abbey View Golf and Running Track Facility, Toddlers' Splash Park, Crazy Golf Course, Basket Ball Court and the Tennis and Netball courts. This includes all aspects of grounds maintenance within these facilities.

The [Westminster Lodge Leisure Centre](#) is owned by the Council and managed in partnership with Sports and Leisure Management Ltd (SLM) they are known locally as [Everyone Active at Westminster Lodge Leisure Centre](#) Everyone Active is responsible for the day to day operational management of the facility including all bookings. The performance for this contract is monitored by the Council's Leisure Services Officer.

[Abbey View Golf and Track](#) is owned by the Council and managed in partnership with [1Life](#). Leisure Connection is responsible for the day to day operational management of the facility including all bookings. The performance for this contract is monitored by the Council's Leisure Services Officer. The current contract expires during the life of this plan.

Historic England Guardianship Area¹

Large areas of the Park around the exposed Roman Walls and Ditch are currently managed directly by English Heritage & Historic England, under a Guardianship Area agreement. This means that, although that land is owned by the Council, Historic England & English Heritage have full responsibility for the maintenance and conservation of the Roman Walls, including grounds maintenance.

In August 2015 English Heritage started a project to carry out repairs and restoration work to the exposed Roman Walls within the Park. The work includes:

- Clearance of vegetation on the Roman Wall
- Conservation of Roman Wall along the Causeway
- Ground repairs at St Germain's Block
- Conservation of Roman Wall at St Germain's Block

The clearance of vegetation was completed in October 2015 and the conservation work started in spring 2016.

English Heritage does not currently have a documented plan in place setting out how they manage the areas that they have responsibility for. They are however in the early stages of reviewing this, although there is currently no confirmed timetable for this process.

Herts and Middlesex Wildlife Trust – Grebe House

To the south west of the Park stands Grebe House, a timber framed building that was salvaged from Watford and relocated to the Park in the late 70s. The land is leased to the [Herts and Middlesex Wildlife Trust](#) by the Council but the building is owned by the Trust.

Inn on the Park

The [Inn on the Park](#) is a popularly café located at the northern end of the park. Though the building is owned by the Council it is operated by the "Inn on the Park St Albans Ltd"

¹ In 2015 English Heritage was restructured and emerged as two new organisations with English Heritage managing the assets and site and Historic England responsible for the statutory element of the historic environment

via a lease. All maintenance responsibility sits with the operator and the Council receives considerable income as a result of this arrangement.

Ice Cream Concession

The Council has an arrangement in place that enables a street trader to sell ice creams in each of the Council's three Parks. The income it generates goes towards the maintenance of 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 the Park users.

Abbey Theatre

The [Abbey Theatre](#) is located within the Park. The land is owned by the Council and leased to the Theatre Trust whilst the building is owned the Trust.

Air Cadets' Hut

The St Albans Air Cadets are based within the Park and lease land from the Council. The building is owned and maintained by the Air Cadets.

Sea Cadet's Hut

The St Albans Sea Cadets are based within the Park and lease land from the Council. The building is owned and maintained by the Air Cadets

Pumping Station

A small area of land was sold to a local water supply company (now Affinity Water) in the middle of the Meadow in front of Westminster Lodge Leisure Centre. The facility is used to pump water out of the ground and used to supply drinking water to the area. Thames Water is responsible for all aspects of this facility.

Television Broadcasting Antenna

The broadcast antenna is located at the boundary of the Park with Bluehouse Hill and King Harry Lane. The land is leased to the BBC and they have responsibility for the maintenance of the antenna and all associated equipment. The site was upgraded to support the digital switch over in 2012.

2.9 COMMUNITY, MANAGEMENT & EVENTS

2.9.1 VERULAMIUM PARK CONSULTATIVE FORUM

While the direct management responsibility for the Park rests with the Council, the Council attempts to involve the community and the Park's other stakeholders in its management.

The Consultative Forum was created to encourage stakeholder and community involvement in the management and development of the Park. The terms of reference are:

- To provide an openly active line of communication for local groups and organizations with an interest in the well-being and future enhancement of the Park.
- To encourage the active support of the local community through the discussion and dissemination of information of mutual concern.
- To meet twice a year to discuss the issues that affect Verulamium Park, inviting relevant District Council officers as and when necessary.

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 Councillors
- Local residents
- Green Spaces and Cemeteries Team Leader
- Principal Green Spaces Officer
- Hertfordshire Constabulary
- John O'Conner Ltd (grounds maintenance contractor)
- SLM Ltd (Westminster Lodge Leisure Centre)
- Leisure Connections Ltd (Abbey View Golf and Track)
- Hertfordshire Orienteering Club
- Police Community Team
- Civic Society
- Abbey Theatre
- Society of St Michael's and Kingsbury
- St Albans Cycle Campaign

The Consultative Forum is administered by the Council, and chaired by the Green Spaces and Cemeteries Team Leader. The Minutes are action-based and along with the agendas are published on the [Council website](#).

2.9.2 COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

Volunteer activity in the Park is undertaken with the support of the Countryside Management Service and various other volunteer groups, including the Ver Valley Society, and through them we continue to gain support and involvement of the local community.

Organised and led by the Countryside Management Service, a new hedge was planted by a group of around 50 volunteers (from a multi faith group) as part of "Interfaith Week". They were joined by Member of Parliament Eric Pickles – the then Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government.

Minor scrub clearance around tree bases has also been carried out by an environmental group from a local School.

The Countryside Management Service carries out regular working parties in the Park with local community groups and volunteers. Activities include hedge planting, scrub clearance on the Roman Wall and improvements to the river Ver by clearing scrub and installing flow diverters to help improve the varied wildlife habitats within the river in the Park.

2.9.3 SITE MANAGEMENT

The Park Rangers are on duty every day 365 days a year. They patrol the park on foot and in the Park Ranger Buggy. It is their role to be a friendly face in the Park, to provide help and information to visitors and to engage with the public. They also perform other important tasks such as emptying of litter bins, picking up of litter and monitoring public safety within the Park. The Park is also patrolled by the Local Community Police Officers and the Council's Green Spaces Officers.

2.9.4 EVENTS

The Park hosts a number of events throughout the year. Special events can be organised by the Council and other individuals, groups and private organisations. Examples of such events include:

- The Annual Fireworks Display
- St Albans Half Marathon
- The weekly St Albans parkrun
- St Albans Festival for All
- The RSPB's "A date with nature"
- The Alban Pilgrimage
- Music in the Park
- Midnight Walk

The largest of the events is the well renowned Fireworks Display in November which attracted in excess of 20,000 spectators.

3. ANALYSIS & EVALUATION

3.1 A WELCOMING PLACE

3.1.1 SIGNAGE AND INTERPRETATION

An extensive programme to improve signage and interpretation in the Park was completed under the last management plan. As part of this work a new Park “brand” was designed and a range of new welcome signs and finger posts were installed to help people find their way around. Working with partners, a number of interpretation boards were also developed to reflect the important wildlife and heritage found at Verulamium. These have been installed at key locations such as the lakes and Roman Walls.

The project, which represented a significant investment, was funded partly by the Council and via a section 106 contribution.

With the heritage of the Park being of such significance, there remains scope to build on the interpretation of its history. In particular this might be through improved links between Verulamium Museum and the wider Park. It might include development of a circular heritage trail to encourage exploration of the more remote areas of the Park and also consider the use of ‘virtual’, web-based and / or smart-phone techniques.

There are currently no notice boards on site and it is not currently considered necessary to have these. Any future need for notice boards will be subject to ongoing review.

In addition, the installation of brown tourist information signs on surrounding roads is needed and this is due to be addressed during 2016/17.

3.1.2 ENTRANCES

In addition to the above mentioned signage, the entrance to Verulamium Park near Verulamium Museum has been re-landscaped to create raised flower-beds and a paved area with picnic benches. The work was planned in consultation with the District Council’s archaeologist, Consultative Forum and English Heritage and provides an attractive welcoming space for visitors to the park and Verulamium Museum.

The entrance to the cycle route off King Harry Lane is in need of improvement, to make it more suited to shared pedestrian and cycle use. This is in hand and will be implemented during the early part of this plan. The Council have recruited funding from Hertfordshire County Council and employed Groundwork to design and manage the contract.

3.1.3 EXISTING AND PROPOSED FACILITIES

Skate Park – Unlike Rothamsted Park in Harpenden, the Park does not have a Skate Park facility and it has been agreed that the Council will look into the feasibility and seek funding opportunities that could allow one to be installed in the Park. To date this project has not progressed but remains an ambition of the Council as and when a suitable funding opportunity arises.

BBQ Areas – There are currently no official BBQ areas in the Park. However, after a successful trial in another park, it is intended to introduce official areas in Verulamium Park in the future.

Picnic Benches – Since the Toddlers' Splash Park opened the Council has received feedback from users asking the provision of picnic benches. New picnic tables have been purchased and installed around the Toddlers Splash Park.

The Council considers that the old bandstand pad has potential for use as a performance area. The feasibility of this, including some kind of roof structure (for instance a sail cover) will be investigated as part of this plan.

3.2 HEALTHY, SAFE & SECURE

3.2.1 CCTV

The Park is currently serviced by a number of CCTV cameras located in the car parks, on street furniture just outside the park and by a camera located on the Abbey Tower. The cameras around the Leisure Centre and surrounding car park were replaced during the redevelopment in 2013.

3.2.2 PARK RANGER

The Grounds Maintenance contractor is required to provide a Park Ranger service during daylight hours seven days per week. The Park Ranger is clearly identifiable, and available to address customer enquiries and deter anti-social behaviour.

3.2.3 BY-LAWS

The by-laws for the park are currently in the process of being updated. Following this process, appropriate public education will be carried out to encourage adherence to these.

3.2.4 PATHS, ROAD AND CYCLE PATHS

Many of the paths that run through the Park are designated as Public Rights of Way and the maintenance responsibility for these paths rests with Hertfordshire County Council. In 2012 Hertfordshire County Council and St Albans District Council constructed cycling routes within the Park running from Westminster Lodge to the Roman Museum and from King Harry Lane along the Causeway to the Fighting Cocks Public House.

The annual repair budget is insufficient to cover the larger capital works such as widening the paths and large areas of resurfacing. A recent survey carried out by the grounds maintenance contractor identified in excess of £200k of works required. Each year sections of hard surfaces that are in need of minor repairs are identified and tenders are sent out for this work. The Council will continue during the period of this management plan to carry annual repairs to the hard surfaces.

Any larger capital works such as path widening would only be carried out if deemed necessary and funding allows.

One location that will be looked at for potential improvement is a narrow path leading north out from the western end of the Westminster Lodge car park.

The King Harry Lane entrance to the permissive cycle path is due to be enhanced as described in section 3.1.2. In addition, it is intended to upgrade the surface of Mud Lane.

The Grounds Maintenance Contractor is required to regularly sweep all paths and report any defects to the Council.

The main routes through the Park are currently unlit. This is in keeping with the nature and history of the site. However, there have recently been calls for the installation of low-key lighting along the Causeway. The feasibility, desirability and environmental impact of such action will be investigated as part of this plan.

A non-definitive path runs from Holywell Hill to the Causeway along the River Ver. There are potential implications for this path from the separate river project and from changes to water extraction. SADC will consider the impact of these when further details are known, but will seek to maintain access where possible.

3.3 CLEAN & WELL MAINTAINED

3.3.1 CHILDREN'S PLAY AREA

The play area is enclosed by a fence 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 December, 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.

There are plans to renew the play area and the community has already been engaged to determine whether the location should change. The outcome was that it should stay in its current location but move back from the footpath. The work is now dependent on available funding, as the estimated cost is between £250K and £300K. £60K has been secured from S106 monies and other sources, such as crowd funding, are being investigated for the remainder.

3.3.2 RUNNING TRACK AND SPLASH PARK

The feasibility of redeveloping the running track is being investigated and options will be considered. This is at a very early stage and the Council will be seeking funding to take it forward once the preferred option has been identified. Should this be possible, key stakeholders including the running club will be consulted.

Similarly, major surface replacement is being considered for the Splash Park for which funding will need to be recruited. In the meantime, regular planned preventative maintenance is carried out to ensure the quality of the surface.

3.4 SUSTAINABILITY

The park is managed in line with the Council's policies on recycling, pesticide use, etc. as described in Chapter 2 of the Management Plan. Additional opportunities to make use of materials generated from site activities such as tree management and conservation activities, should be investigated as opportunities arise.

As described previously, the Council is working to stop the feeding of wild birds around the lake, to reduce pollution of the water.

3.4.1 FERTILIZER USAGE

The use of fertilizer on the sports pitches has been adjusted so that it is only applied where needed.

3.4.2 RECYCLING TARGET

New recycling bins are to be installed, providing Scheduled Ancient Monument consent is obtained. Once this has been done there will be a need to establish a recycling target. This will be done by initially analysing the preparing of recyclable waste compared to general waste removed from the Park.

3.5 CONSERVATION & HERITAGE

3.5.1 HERITAGE INTERPRETATION

Refer to Section 3.1.1 above regarding signage and interpretation.

Collaboration will also be required with English Heritage, who are responsible for managing the Roman Wall and surrounding area. This will ensure the two management plans work towards shared objectives.

There is scope for enhanced visibility of the London Gate. Reconsideration of the role of the adjacent railings and scrub will be done alongside English Heritage.

3.5.2 RIVER VER – Revitalising The River Ver, St Albans

The River Ver is an ecologically significant chalk river, with the capacity for supporting a diversity of flora and fauna. However, when the lakes were created in the Park in the early half of the 20th Century, the River was canalised, forming an unnatural channel. Currently, the section of the river that runs past the lakes is very slow moving, leading to deposition of silt. In many areas the river is also covered by a dense tree canopy, allowing little light through and leading to deposition of leaf litter.

REVITALISING
THE RIVER
ST ALBANS



Some work has already been undertaken to improve the river through the park. This includes removing selected trees and crown-reduction of others to reduce the amount of

shading and leaf litter deposition. In addition, flow deflectors have been installed to increase the flow of the water.

However, more work is needed to achieve the full potential of the river through the Park and beyond. The Environment Agency and Affinity Water have a programme of work which aims to help get the Ver to Good Ecological Status over the next four years. As part of this programme they are working in partnership with SADC and the CMS to look at what can be done to improve the Ver through St Albans including the Park. In September 2016 they went out to tender to commission a study to identify feasible options to restore or rehabilitate the river, for ecological benefit and, where appropriate, other benefits such as urban lake improvements (see below), flood risk reduction, amenity benefits, heritage, education and recreation. The results of this study will be used as a basis for stakeholder and wider community engagement and inform development of detailed design and delivery of the preferred options.

The detail of the project is not included within this plan. However, the study brief “Feasibility Study, Options Appraisal and Outline Designs for the River Ver Through St Albans” can be found in Appendix 4.

The Council work closely with the Environment Agency and reports any obstructions to the river that could result in flooding. In addition, the Grounds Maintenance Contractor regularly checks for and removes litter.

Then project now has its own website and full detail along with the current proposal and updates are available at the site:

www.revitalisingtheriver.co.uk

3.5.3 LAKES

The condition of both lakes is far from perfect with room for improvement. They have become heavily silted and the over-population of waterfowl and associated problems with fouling has lead to the water having its oxygen content depleted by organic nutrients. This has greatly reduced the lakes ecological value and its aesthetic appeal. In addition, significant funds have recently been spent to remove large amounts of accumulated organic material including algae that has grown in the nutrient-rich environment.

A key factor is the large population of birds being fed by the public. Though we recognise the community and social value of feeding the birds the Council has, through consultation, decided to ask the public to not to feed the birds. This is being undertaken through a PR campaign including on-site signage and liaison with the Inn on the Park to stop the sale of bird food to the public.

In addition to resolving the siltation and nutrient issues, there is considerable scope to enhance the biodiversity of the lake and its various habitats, including the islands and lake margins, and also deal with issues associated with the concrete lining and banks. The lakes will therefore be considered as part of the Environment Agency / Affinity Water plan mentioned above. They will be treated as a stand-alone project so that any improvements can be undertaken independent of work on the river.

Then project now has its own website and full detail along with the current proposal and updates are available at the site:

On a more day-to-day management front, the Grounds Maintenance Contractor is required to ensure that the lakes are maintained in a clean and attractive condition. Work that they carry out is detailed in Appendix 1.

The Council has considered installing life preservers but following advice from a Health and Safety Consultant has decided against this option as the practicalities outweigh the level of risk.

3.5.4 GRASSLAND

There is an abundance of grassland in the Park and it is important to ensure the maintenance regimes are appropriate and cost effective. For example, there are many sports pitches which, although subjected to more intensive maintenance and higher costs, serve a valuable recreational function. There are also areas of amenity grass which receive fairly regular cutting through the growing season and, although low in biodiversity value, serve the function of providing space for informal recreation. In other areas where recreation isn't as desirable, the focus is more on biodiversity value and associated relaxed maintenance regimes. Grassland management should consider how the site is used and where maintenance regimes could be adapted to provide most benefit.

In particular, the field parallel to Bluehouse Hill has a diverse range of flowering plant and grass species and is currently managed through a conservation 'cut and lift' regime. A more sustainable and beneficial management regime would be through livestock grazing, either sheep or cattle. This management plan will therefore include consultation on the introduction of small numbers of animals to graze this area.

Alongside the consultation on grazing, consideration will be given to converting areas of amenity grassland to management as wildflower meadow. This would provide an enhanced habitat, a feature of interest for visitors and would reduce maintenance costs.

3.5.5 WOODLAND

The woodland in the Park is fairly limited and mainly concentrated along the south side of the Park around the Roman Wall which is currently maintained by English Heritage. The area has significance for both biodiversity and visitors, and management of it should aim to benefit both. For example, current access through the woodland, along the path from King Harry Lane, is quite dark due to dense canopy; therefore there is a need to thin the canopy. This would not only increase the attractiveness and security of the path, but also help encourage woodland flora and enhance the visual character and structural stability of the Roman Wall.

There is also a number of existing projects in operation, carried out in partnership with volunteers and CMS, that aim to manage parts of the woodland to assist the regeneration of self seeded trees and these need to be developed further.

In addition there is an area of woodland and grassland on the hillside at the bottom of Abbey Mill Lane, known as Abbey Mill Lane greenspace. This area, owned by the Council, currently lies outside the main park boundary, but has potential to be integrated more closely with the Park. Work to achieve this is included in this plan. Selective

removal of trees will open up views across the river and lakes and into the wider parkland. Improved access, low-key management of vegetation and installation of visitor furniture such as benches and low-key signage, will create a pleasant and perhaps slightly quieter place to enjoy the Park.

3.5.6 HEDGEROWS

There are a number of hedgerows across the site, providing important ecological corridors/habitats and landscape features. These should be retained and enhanced where possible. They are of varying degrees of quality and condition and in recent years work has been initiated to improve them where needed. In addition, several new hedges have been planted, including in Bell Meadow (with consent from English Heritage) and in Seabrook Meadow.

Running through the centre of the Park is an ancient hedgerow that divides the formal and informal part of the Park. The hedge is currently fairly formally trimmed and there are a number of informal access points along its length. As part of this plan it is intended to regenerate this hedgerow, and in doing so will ensure that it includes a mix of native species used of local provenance, characteristic of the area, we will also allow a number of 'standards' to grow up to maturity, rather than cutting the whole hedge.

Some of the access points will be formalised and use of the others deterred. The formalised access points will seek to improve visibility from the path onto adjoining spaces. This will reduce the potential for conflict between cyclists on the main path and pedestrians, particularly young children, joining the path through gaps in the hedge.

3.5.7 TREES

The Park has a good stock of mature trees that are fundamental to its parkland character. These include significant features, such as the avenues that are remnants of the old field boundaries. At some point in the future these trees will die and either need to be retained as standing deadwood or felled, which will have a significant impact on the Park. Therefore, management of the site will look to retain the Park's distinctive character in the long term through establishing new tree planting that will eventually replace the mature tree stock. In addition, the park landscape might benefit from planting of small groups of trees within the large expanses of grassland, to direct and frame the views. Such planting will need to be discussed with the District Archaeologist, Historic England and English Heritage and consent will need to be gained to ensure protection of buried archaeological remains.

The Council also has a Memorial Tree Programme where designated locations have been agreed with English Heritage allowing the Council to plant specimen trees in memory of a friend / relative or to celebrate an event. This programme will be developed further.

3.5.8 BIRD FEEDING STATION

During 2016/17, a wildlife and bird feeding station is being established in an area next to the Wildlife Trust garden at Grebe House, in the St Michael's area of the Park. This work has been developed by the Hertfordshire and Middlesex Wildlife Trust, who will be managing the area on completion. It will see great enhancement of currently disused part of the Park, providing a quiet area where visitors can sit and relax whilst watching wild

birds feeding on the feeding stations. The Trust have successfully recruited funding for the project from the Tesco's Bags Of Help Grant.

3.6 COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

3.6.1 VERULAMIUM PARK CONSULTATIVE FORUM

The Park has a Consultative Forum which provides the opportunity for stakeholders and the wider community to become engaged in the management and development of the Park. They are one of the key stakeholders in consultation over the development of this plan. Their input is valuable to the ongoing management of the site and should continue to be supported.

3.6.2 VOLUNTEER INVOLVEMENT

Verulamium Park is fortunate to have a number of voluntary groups willing to lend their time and support to the management of the site; these include the Ver Valley Society, CMS, St Albans School, and the Herts Probationary Service. It is important that these and other groups continue to be invited to contribute to tasks and activities within the Park.

3.7 MARKETING

The signage project has seen the creation of a logo for the Park which is used on the Parks Facebook page, signage and publications.



In recent years the Council has invested in its various website, these include:

www.stalbans.gov.uk/verulamiumpark

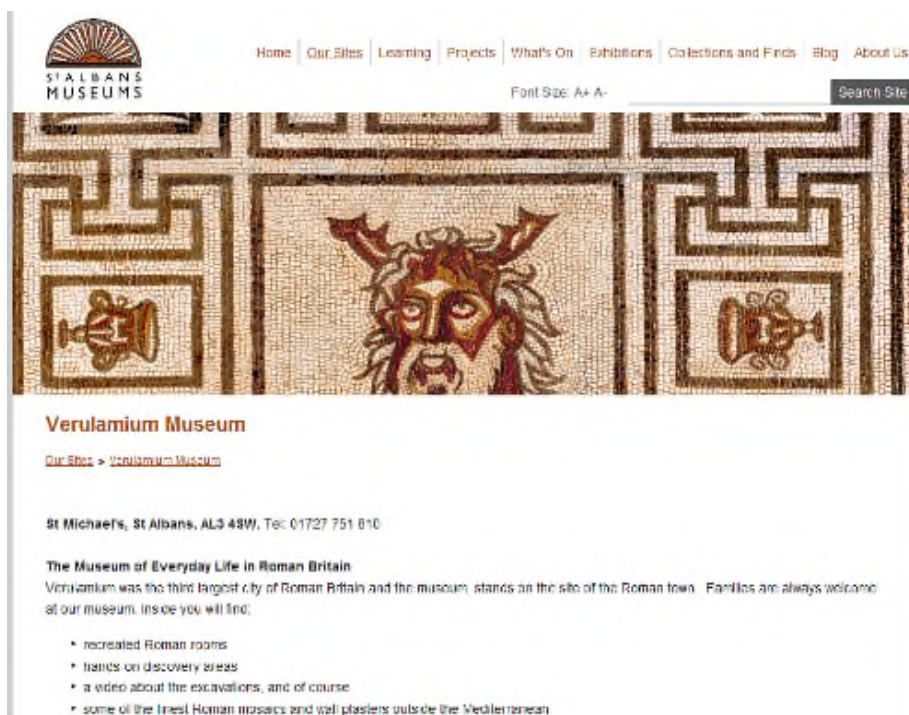


This Verulamium Park page on www.stalbans.gov.uk and is functional. It provided detailed information about the park, access to the minutes of the Park Forum meetings, the Management Plan and leaflets.

www.enjoystalbans.com is the Council Tourism website and targets visitors to St Albans. Verulamium Park has its own page. <http://www.enjoystalbans.com/verulamium-park>



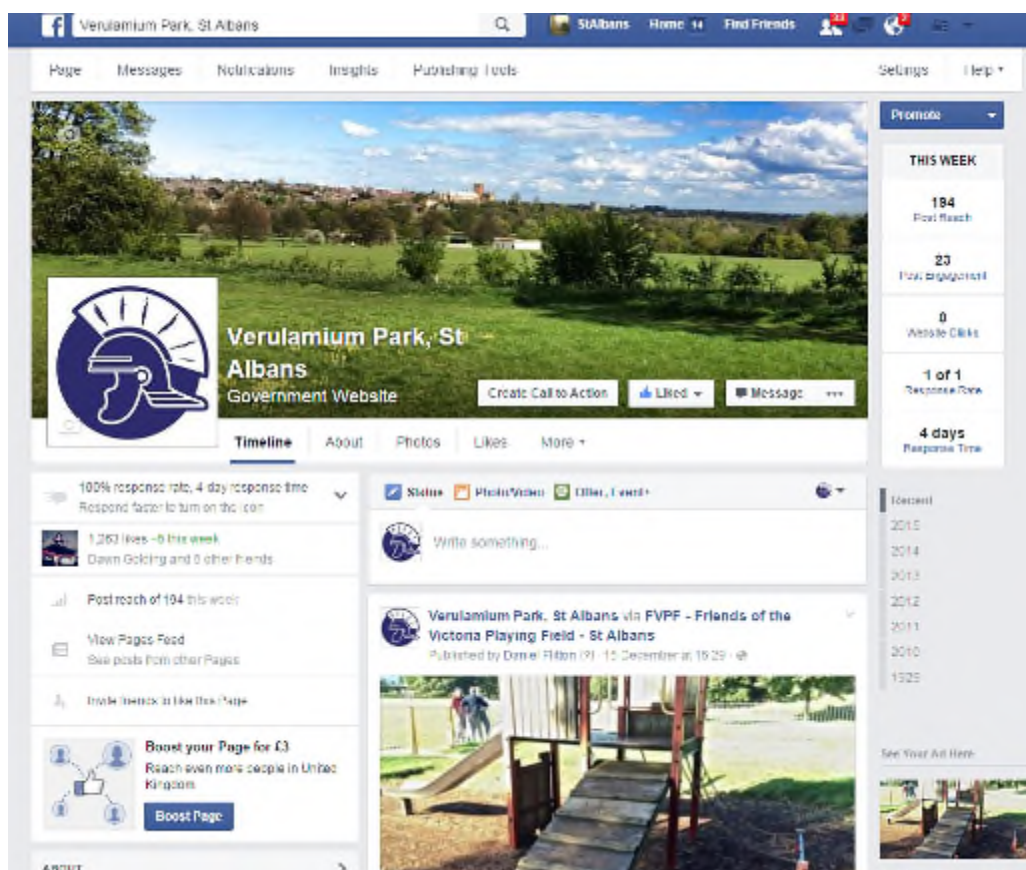
<http://www.stalbansmuseums.org.uk/verulamium/> is the website for the Verulamium Museum and provides information and resources for visitors.



Social Media

www.facebook.com/verulamiumpark

Social media is becoming an increasingly popular means for the Council and the public to engage. The Parks Facebook page currently has 1620 followers.



4. AIMS & OBJECTIVES

A WELCOMING PLACE

To make Verulamium Park a welcoming site with inviting entrances and a high standard of features and facilities within that will encourage long stays and repeat visits.

- A1 Maintain and improve all site entrances to form welcoming, appealing gateways to the Park
- A2 Maintain signage to enable visitors to successfully navigate to, from, and around the Park
- A3 Improve and upgrade existing recreational facilities as required; where appropriate, provide new facilities where a need and/or opportunity has been identified

B HEALTHY, SAFE & SECURE

To ensure that visitors to Verulamium Park feel safe and able to explore and enjoy the whole site at all times.

- B1 Provide and maintain a suitable network of accessible paths and transport routes throughout the Park
- B2 Maintain a regular staff presence within Verulamium Park
- B3 Continue to carry out regular surveys and inspections of the trees and structures within the Park to ensure their integrity

C CLEAN & WELL MAINTAINED

To maintain Verulamium Park to the highest of standards so that it is in peak condition for every visitor.

- C1 Carry out a programme of regular monitoring and timely maintenance to ensure that all fixtures, fittings and buildings are maintained in a serviceable, safe and attractive condition
- C2 Remove redundant structures and furniture in poor condition; replace with uniform design of furniture
- C3 Continue to make the most of the Park Rangers to monitor the grounds maintenance contract and ensure its success

D SUSTAINABILITY

To ensure compliance with the council's environmental policies and seek sustainable activities and solutions relevant to the special nature of the site

- D1 Make the most of any opportunities to reuse generated by-products of conservation activities within the site

E CONSERVATION & HERITAGE

To conserve and enhance the nationally important heritage, landscape and natural assets which make Verulamium Park such an important site

- E1 Ensure above ground historic features and buried archaeological remains are appropriately managed to ensure their preservation, enhancement, amenity, educational value and enjoyment
- E2 Work in partnership with English Heritage to ensure that this plan and the developing plan for the Roman wall are complementary to each other
- E3 Conserve the important landscape character of the site and its relationship with St Albans and the wider landscape
- E4 Work in partnership with Environment Agency, Affinity Water and other key stakeholders to improve the ecology and biodiversity value of the River Ver within the Park
- E5 Manage grassland throughout the Park to reflect the needs of recreation and biodiversity, including the potential limited introduction of grazing to the main area of conservation grassland in the west of the park and conservation cutting regimes in other appropriate parts of the site. Work in partnership with others including the Wildlife Sites Partnership to inform and support this management.
- E6 Maintain and restore a network of well managed hedgerows
- E7 Identify opportunities for further ecological enhancement projects within the Park, including native tree planting to enrich the landscape
- E8 Work in partnership with others to support the separate development of a restoration plan for the lake

F COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

To provide opportunities for the local community to engage with Verulamium Park and to get actively involved with management of the site.

- F1 Promote and build on recent work to promote a greater understanding and interest in the Roman town and development of the post-Roman landscape
- F2 Maintain interpretive schemes that will help foster a better understanding of Verulamium Park's valuable wildlife
- F3 Develop an annual programme of events and volunteer tasks with partners and key stakeholders and communicate widely
- F4 Consider all activities within this plan as potential tasks for volunteer groups including St Albans School, Ver Valley Society, CMS, and the Herts Probationary Service and local archaeological groups.

G **MARKETING**

To develop new and innovative ways to attract a wider variety of visitors to the Park, and to fully realise its value as a site of open space

- G1 Maintain the 'brand' identity created for Verulamium Park and ensure this is used on internal signage and external marketing materials
- G2 Work with the Museum to develop more interactive interpretation of the heritage of the wider Park
- G3 Development of a circular heritage trail to encourage exploration of the more remote areas of the Park
- G4 Build on existing interpretation to further explore and promote the special wildlife and biodiversity of the Park
- G5 Continue to work with 'Enjoy St Albans' and other sources to promote Verulamium Park to a wider audience.

5. ACTION PLANS AND MAPS

YEAR 1 ACTION PLAN 2017 – 2018

Action	Obj. Ref	When	Responsibility	Funding	Est. Cost	Spec. Ref	Status
Recruit funding and upgrade play area	A3	April – Oct	SADC	Internal and external	£250,000	-	In progress, £180,00 raised so far
Investigation into the potential for upgrade of running track and associated facilities incl. toilets, changing and park ranger base; scope funding; establish project 2018 to 2020	A3	All year	SADC	Internal and External	£400,000	-	In progress
Replace fencing of tennis/netball courts	A3	April – Oct	SADC	Internal budget	£5000	-	Complete
Investigation into the potential for upgrading the surface of the splash park; scope funding; establish project	A3	All year	SADC	Internal budge		-	Complete
Replace and realign bridge from King Harry Lane	A1	All year	SADC	-	-	-	In progress
Liaise with English Heritage and investigate option for the creation of formal vehicle and pedestrian access from the lay-by on King Harry Lane	A1	All year	SADC	-	-	-	Complete
Consider installation of new cycle racks	B1	All year	SADC; CMS	-	-	-	
Investigate potential improvements to path leading from Westminster Lodge car park	A1	All year	SADC; CMS	Internal Budge	£6000	-	In progress

Develop links between Verulamium Museum and the wider park. Scope potential for a heritage trail.	F1 G3	All year	SADC; CMS	-	-	-	
Consult with stakeholders on the introduction of grazing to Seabrook Meadow	E5	All year	SADC; CMS	-	-	-	In progress. Have raised at consultative forum
Liaise with Environment Agency, Affinity Water and others over River Ver enhancement project	E4 E8	All year	SADC; CMS	-	-	-	In progress
Seek funding for River Ver enhancements once feasibility study complete.	E4	Once feasibility complete	SADC; CMS	-	-	-	Awaiting results of feasibility study
Explore geophysical data to find areas of the Park in which it would be appropriate to plant trees	E1 E3	Feb	SADC; VM; CMS	-	-	-	In progress
Liaise with English Heritage over the development of a management plan for the Roman Wall.	E2	All year	SADC; CMS	Internal	£2500	-	New signs installed
Review with English Heritage the railings and scrub adjacent to the London Gate.	E1	All year	SADC	Internal budget	£250	-	
Investigate the feasibility, desirability and environmental impact of installation of low-key lighting along the Causeway	B1	All year	SADC	-	£500,000	-	
Carry out ferreting to control rabbit population in the Park	E1	Outside of peak times	SADC	Internal budget	FOC	-	Complete

Continue to work with the Inn on the Park to stop the sale of bird food (for feeding the water fowl) to the public and maintain PR campaign to deter people from feeding of the birds	E4	All year	SADC	Internal Budge	£1500	-	Complete, signs installed
Ongoing replacement of benches and bins as part of a rolling programme of refurbishment works and reactive maintenance	C2	All year	SADC	Internal budget + GM budget	£1300 each	6.2.1	On Going
Install recycling bins	C1 D1	All year	SADC	Internal budget	-	6.2.1	Complete
Maintain above and below ground scheduled monuments in accordance with EH requirements; annual monitoring review with EH Field Monument Warden	E1	All year	EH; SADC	-	-	-	Complete
Develop proposals for extension of the Abbey Theatre	F3	Ongoing	Abbey Theatre	-	-	-	Ongoing

YEAR 2 ACTION PLAN 2018 – 2019

Action	Obj. Ref	When	Responsibility	Funding	Est. Cost	Spec. Ref	Status
Liaise with Environment Agency, Affinity Water and others over implementation of River Ver enhancement project	E4	All year	SADC; CMS	-	-	-	Ongoing
Liaise with Environment Agency, Affinity Water and others over implementation of lake enhancement project	E8	All year	SADC; CMS	-	-	-	Ongoing
Investigation into the potential for upgrade of running track and associated facilities incl. toilets, changing and park ranger base; scope funding; establish project 2018 to 2020	A3	All year	SADC	Internal and External	£400,000	-	Ongoing
Investigate strategic scrub reduction to open views from King Harry Lane	A1	Oct-Feb	SADC; CMS	-	-	6.4.3	Complete
Carry out planting of approx.. 15 no. standard trees in appropriate areas of the park with reusable metal tree guards.	E2	Nov – Jan	CMS; SADC; VM	Internal budget	£2500	6.4.2	Deferred to 2019/20
Enhance management of central ancient hedgerow, formalise key entrances, gap up others	E6	Nov-Feb	SADC; CMS	Internal budget	£300	6.4.1	
Continue to work with the Inn on the Park to stop the sale of bird food (for feeding the water fowl) to the public and maintain PR campaign to deter people from feeding of the birds	E4	All year	SADC	-	-	-	

Carry out ferreting to control rabbit population in the Park	E1	Outside of peak times	SADC	Internal budget	-	-	Complete
Ongoing replacement of benches and bins as part of a rolling programme of refurbishment works and reactive maintenance.	C2	All year	SADC	Internal budget + GM budget	-	6.2.1	Ongoing
Maintain above and below ground scheduled monuments in accordance with EH requirements; annual monitoring review with EH Field Monument Warden	E1	All year	EH	-	-	-	
Liaise with Environment Agency, Affinity Water and others over River Ver enhancement project.	E4 E8	All year	SADC, CMS				Ongoing

YEAR 3 ACTION PLAN 2019 – 2020

Action	Obj. Ref	When	Responsibility	Funding	Est. Cost	Spec. Ref	Status
Establishment maintenance of new trees	E2 C3	All year	JOC	GM budget	-	-	
Continue to work with the Inn on the Park to stop the sale of bird food (for feeding the water fowl) to the public and maintain PR campaign to deter people from feeding of the birds	E4	All year	SADC	-	-	-	
Continue to work with the Environment Agency in developing the River Ver and lake improvement project	E8	All year	SADC, CM and EA	TBC			
Carry out ferreting to control rabbit population in the Park	E1	Outside of peak times	SADC	Internal budget	-	-	
Ongoing replacement of benches and bins as part of a rolling programme of refurbishment works and reactive maintenance.	C2	All year	SADC	Internal budget + GM budget	-	6.2.1	
Maintain above and below ground scheduled monuments in accordance with EH requirements; annual monitoring review with EH Field Monument Warden	E1	All year	EH	-	-	-	
Carry out planting of approx.. 15 no. standard trees in appropriate areas of the park with reusable metal tree guards.	E2	Nov – Jan	CMS; SADC; VM	Internal budget	£2500	6.4.2	
Carry out resurfacing of paths around the lake.	C1	Nov – Jan	SADC	Internal budget	£8000		Complete
Carry out improvement work to the footpath link the	C1	Nov –	SADC	Internal	£10,000		Complete

running track car park and the Park including feature to restrict access to the park		March		budget and external funding			
--	--	-------	--	-----------------------------	--	--	--

Task Lead

- Countryside Management Service
- St Albans City & District Council
- Grounds Maintenance Contractor

VERULAMIUM PARK

Year 3 Action Plan

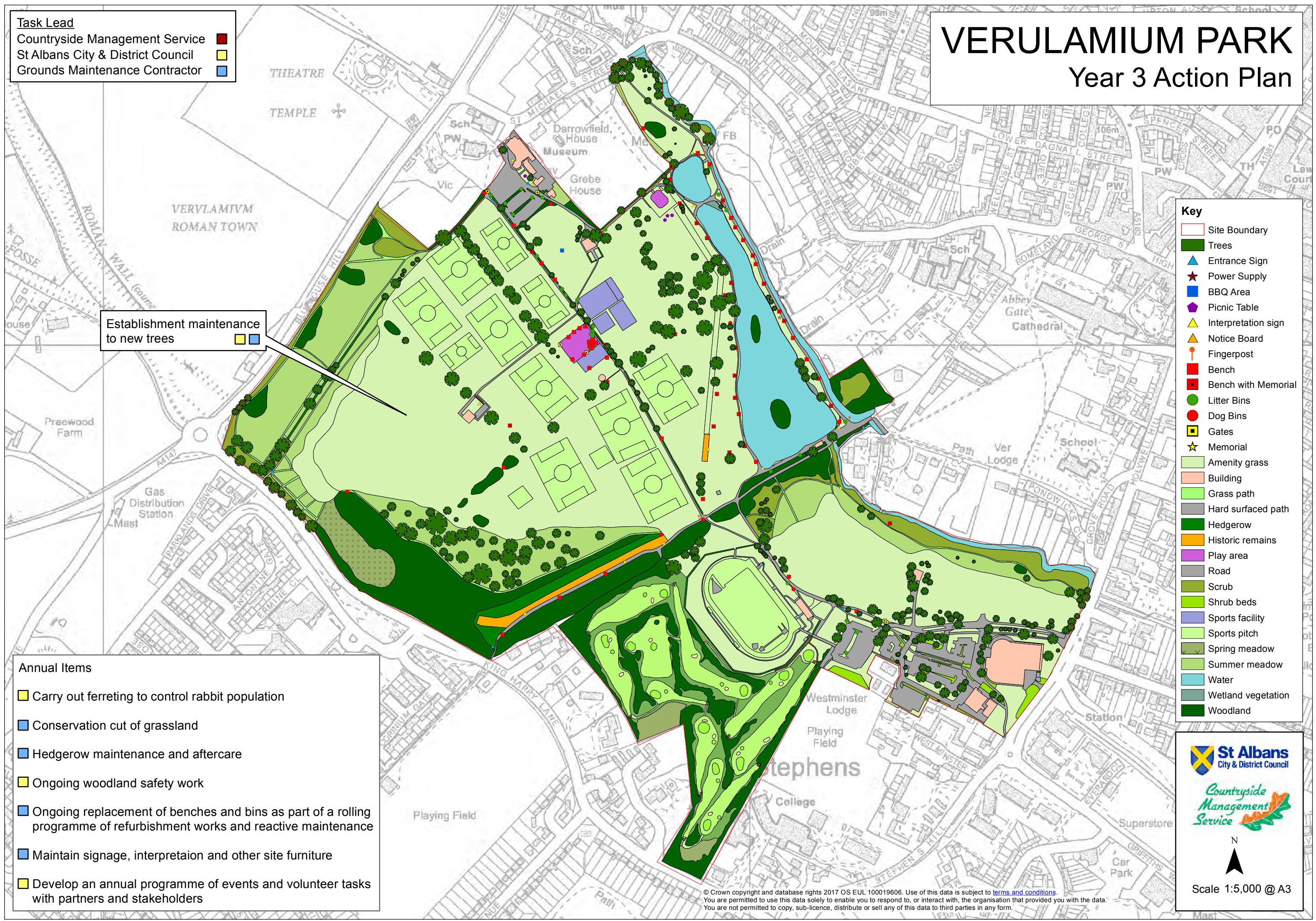
Key

- Site Boundary
- Trees
- Entrance Sign
- Power Supply
- BBQ Area
- Picnic Table
- Interpretation sign
- Notice Board
- Fingerpost
- Bench
- Bench with Memorial
- Litter Bins
- Dog Bins
- Gates
- Memorial
- Amenity grass
- Building
- Grass path
- Hard surfaced path
- Hedgerow
- Historic remains
- Play area
- Road
- Scrub
- Shrub beds
- Sports facility
- Sports pitch
- Spring meadow
- Summer meadow
- Water
- Wetland vegetation
- Woodland

Establishment maintenance to new trees

Annual Items

- Carry out ferreting to control rabbit population
- Conservation cut of grassland
- Hedgerow maintenance and aftercare
- Ongoing woodland safety work
- Ongoing replacement of benches and bins as part of a rolling programme of refurbishment works and reactive maintenance
- Maintain signage, interpretaion and other site furniture
- Develop an annual programme of events and volunteer tasks with partners and stakeholders



© Crown copyright and database rights 2017 OS EUL 100019606. Use of this data is subject to [terms and conditions](#). You are permitted to use this data solely to enable you to respond to, or interact with, the organisation that provided you with the data. You are not permitted to copy, sub-licence, distribute or sell any of this data to third parties in any form.

St Albans
City & District Council

Countryside Management Service

N

Scale 1:5,000 @ A3

YEAR 4 ACTION PLAN 2020 – 2021

Action	Obj. Ref	When	Responsibility	Funding	Est. Cost	Spec. Ref	Status
Establishment maintenance of new trees	E2 C3	All year	JOC	GM budget	-	-	
Continue to work with the Environment Agency in developing the River Ver and lake improvement project	E8	All year	SADC, CM and EA	TBC			
Continue to work with the Inn on the Park to stop the sale of bird food (for feeding the water fowl) to the public and maintain PR campaign to deter people from feeding of the birds	E4	All year	SADC	-	-	-	
Carry out ferreting to control rabbit population in the Park	E1	Outside of peak times	SADC	Internal budget	-	-	
Ongoing replacement of benches and bins as part of a rolling programme of refurbishment works and reactive maintenance.	C2	All year	SADC	Internal budget + GM budget	-	6.2.1	
Maintain above and below ground scheduled monuments in accordance with EH requirements; annual monitoring review with EH Field Monument Warden	E1	All year	EH	-	-	-	

Task Lead

- Countryside Management Service
- St Albans City & District Council
- Grounds Maintenance Contractor

VERULAMIUM PARK

Year 4 Action Plan

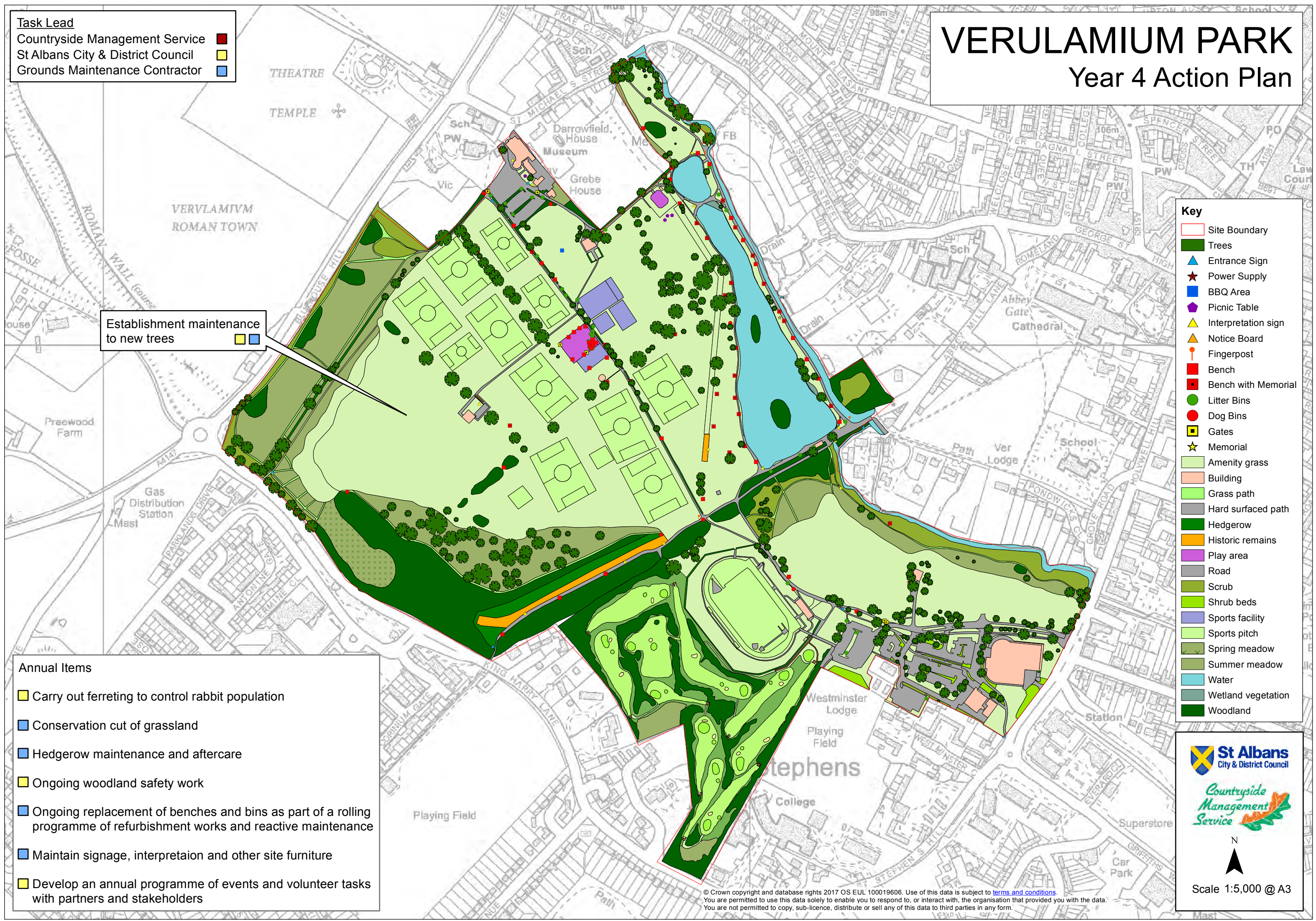
Key

- Site Boundary
- Trees
- Entrance Sign
- Power Supply
- BBQ Area
- Picnic Table
- Interpretation sign
- Notice Board
- Fingerpost
- Bench
- Bench with Memorial
- Litter Bins
- Dog Bins
- Gates
- Memorial
- Amenity grass
- Building
- Grass path
- Hard surfaced path
- Hedgerow
- Historic remains
- Play area
- Road
- Scrub
- Shrub beds
- Sports facility
- Sports pitch
- Spring meadow
- Summer meadow
- Water
- Wetland vegetation
- Woodland

Establishment maintenance to new trees

Annual Items

- Carry out ferreting to control rabbit population
- Conservation cut of grassland
- Hedgerow maintenance and aftercare
- Ongoing woodland safety work
- Ongoing replacement of benches and bins as part of a rolling programme of refurbishment works and reactive maintenance
- Maintain signage, interpretaion and other site furniture
- Develop an annual programme of events and volunteer tasks with partners and stakeholders



© Crown copyright and database rights 2017 OS EUL 100019606. Use of this data is subject to [terms and conditions](#). You are permitted to use this data solely to enable you to respond to, or interact with, the organisation that provided you with the data. You are not permitted to copy, sub-licence, distribute or sell any of this data to third parties in any form.

St Albans
City & District Council

Countryside Management Service

N

Scale 1:5,000 @ A3

YEAR 5 ACTION PLAN 2021 – 2022

Action	Obj. Ref	When	Responsibility	Funding	Est. Cost	Spec. Ref	Status
Establishment maintenance of new trees	E2 C3	All year	JOC	GM budget	-	-	
Continue to work with the Inn on the Park to stop the sale of bird food (for feeding the water fowl) to the public and maintain PR campaign to deter people from feeding of the birds	E4	All year	SADC	-	-	-	
Carry out ferreting to control rabbit population in the Park	E1	Outside of peak times	SADC	Internal budget	-	-	
Ongoing replacement of benches and bins as part of a rolling programme of refurbishment works and reactive maintenance.	C2	All year	SADC	Internal budget + GM budget	-	6.2.1	
Maintain above and below ground scheduled monuments in accordance with EH requirements; annual monitoring review with EH Field Monument Warden	E1	All year	EH	-	-	-	
Review and revise Management Plan for the period 2022-2027	-	All year	SADC; CMS	Internal budget	-	-	

Task Lead

- Countryside Management Service
- St Albans City & District Council
- Grounds Maintenance Contractor

VERULAMIUM PARK

Year 5 Action Plan

Establishment maintenance to new trees

Key

- Site Boundary
- Trees
- Entrance Sign
- Power Supply
- BBQ Area
- Picnic Table
- Interpretation sign
- Notice Board
- Fingerpost
- Bench
- Bench with Memorial
- Litter Bins
- Dog Bins
- Gates
- Memorial
- Amenity grass
- Building
- Grass path
- Hard surfaced path
- Hedgerow
- Historic remains
- Play area
- Road
- Scrub
- Shrub beds
- Sports facility
- Sports pitch
- Spring meadow
- Summer meadow
- Water
- Wetland vegetation
- Woodland

Annual Items

- Carry out ferreting to control rabbit population
- Conservation cut of grassland
- Hedgerow maintenance and aftercare
- Ongoing woodland safety work
- Ongoing replacement of benches and bins as part of a rolling programme of refurbishment works and reactive maintenance
- Maintain signage, interpretaion and other site furniture
- Develop an annual programme of events and volunteer tasks with partners and stakeholders

© Crown copyright and database rights 2017 OS EUL 100019606. Use of this data is subject to [terms and conditions](#). You are permitted to use this data solely to enable you to respond to, or interact with, the organisation that provided you with the data. You are not permitted to copy, sub-licence, distribute or sell any of this data to third parties in any form.

St Albans
City & District Council

Countryside Management Service

N

Scale 1:5,000 @ A3

6. SPECIFICATIONS

The following supplementary information is to be read in conjunction with the Action Plan and maps that form part of the Verulamium Park 5-year Management Plan.

6.1 SIGNAGE AND INTERPRETATION

6.1.1 EXTERNAL BROWN SIGNAGE

Actions

- Installation of 'brown' direction signage in and around St Albans

Approval, design and installation of Brown Signage fall under the control of the Hertfordshire County Council Highways Authority. Steps are as follows:

- Consult Appendix C of the 'Highways Signing Guidance, Nov 2010', produced by Herts CC.
<http://www.hertsdirect.org/docs/pdf/h/signingguide.pdf>
- Contact Herts CC Highways Authority for forms.
- Complete Self Assessment form and Application form – return to HCC with £75 (+VAT) administration fee.
- Pay £75 (+VAT) site feasibility fee.
- Following recommendations from Herts CC, pay fee for design and installation.

6.2 FURNITURE AND FITTINGS

6.2.1 BENCHES AND BINS

Actions

- Ongoing replacement of benches and bins as part of a rolling programme of refurbishment works and reactive maintenance.
- Remove benches from around the site that are in poor condition and/or inappropriately sited

Benches

Verulamium Park currently suffers from an abundance of benches of differing style and condition, some of which are inappropriately sited. All benches are to be gradually removed and a decision made as to whether replacement is desirable. In these instances, benches are to be replaced with one of the following standard styles:

- Style 1 will be an Alderley bench (pictured below), already used by SADC in the Donated Seats scheme and to be used in the more formal areas of Verulamium Park, such as around the lakes and amenities.
- Style 2 will be a more rustic, simple timber bench, to be used in the more informal parts of the park such as the meadow and wooded areas.



Bins

Throughout the site there are many bins of varying styles and conditions. Bins are to be gradually removed where inappropriately sited, damaged or in poor condition, and replaced with a standard style to be agreed on.



6.2.3 BBQ AREA

Actions

- Installation of a BBQ area, to be located between the Inn on the Park and Verulamium Museum car park.

Current plans for BBQ area are to construct in a similar manner to the successful and well-used facilities at Rothamsted Park. These consist of a small area of

paved hard standing, a bin for general waste and litter, and a bin for the disposal of hot coals / disposable BBQs (photo below).

However, prior to initiation of these plans, other options that may be more appropriate to Verulamium Park should be explored. For example, the provision of a more formal facility in partnership with the Inn on the Park.

6.3 GATES AND FENCING

Actions

- Consult with stakeholders on the introduction of grazing to Seabrook Meadow Vegetation clearance to open up views from King Harry Lane towards St Albans; to include strategic reduction of tree and shrub belt (retention of mature trees)

Boundaries will be secured where vegetation management may open up gaps and where grazing is to be introduced. Stock fencing will be used and will be subject to Scheduled Monument consent.

6.4 HABITAT AND VEGETATION MANAGEMENT

6.4.1 HEDGEROW REFURBISHMENT

Actions

- Restore ancient hedgerow through centre of park.

Gap up hedge, leaving 3 formal access point.

- Prepare area for planting by strimming back any ground vegetation, arisings to be removed.
- Plants to be bare root transplant whips of between 40-60cm (see table below for species mix)
- Species to be planted using the slit trench method (to avoid disturbance to archaeology), in double staggered rows of approximately 5 plants per linear metre (roughly 40cm gap between plants).
- Each plant to be fitted with a spiral tree guard, supported by bamboo cane.

Species	Mix	No.
Field Maple	20%	40
Hawthorn	60%	120
Hazel	15%	30
Holly	5%	10
TOTAL (no. of guards & canes)		200

6.4.2 TREE PLANTING

Actions

- Establishment of new tree planting across the site, to include memorial trees. Appropriate locations to be identified by archaeologist.

It is important that plans are put in place to provide future replacements for the existing mature tree stock. This is often quite a difficult activity in a public park where new standard trees can be subject to vandalism, and establishment can be tricky. Also, in the case of Verulamium Park, the scale of the site means that the new young trees would appear rather small and insignificant in the wider context of the site.

When appropriate locations and species have been identified, these can be made available for planting as sponsored, memorial trees.

It is suggested that tree planting incorporates the use of high quality tree guards (i.e. 2m high black cast iron) that will make for a feature in themselves. These should be of appropriate design and able to be fixed, removed and reused as required.

Tree species, specifications and locations to be confirmed.

6.4.3 VEGETATION CLEARANCE TO OPEN UP VIEWS

Actions

- Strategic vegetation clearance to open up views from King Harry Lane towards St Albans; to include sections of shrub belt reduction (retention of mature trees)

The views from the south western corner of the Park are exceptional, providing an extensive panorama of St Albans. In this part of the site, there is currently a dense band of shrubs and trees that acts as a visual blockade between the Park (and view), and King Harry Lane. Whilst retaining the broad sense of enclosure that this vegetation barrier provides, there is a great opportunity to open up this boundary at a number of key locations so that the full value of the view can be realised.

- Due to the impact of the activity, there may be some public consultation required, particularly to properties on King Harry Lane.
- Identify mature trees to be retained and locations for scrub reduction.
- Establish a volunteer task or employ a contractor to clear out all other vegetation. All arisings to be chipped and removed from site.
- Install new boundary fence and entrance gates (see above)

7. CONTACTS

Organisation	Role	Contact Details	Phone/email
St Albans City & District Council	Owner & site manager, Secretariat of the Committee, 3 Council Members on Consultative Forum	Daniel Flitton	01727 819366 Daniel.flitton@stalbans.gov.uk
Verulamium Museum	Museums Manager	Kate Warren	01727 751812
Verulamium Museum	Curator, Pre-historic to Medieval	David Thorold	David.Thorold@stalbans.gov.uk
Abbey Theatre	Chair	Martin Goodman	07808 176385 chair@abbeytheatre.org.uk
Abbey Theatre	Theatre Manager	Tina Swain	01727 847472 manager@abbeytheatre.org.uk
Heritage England	Scheduled Ancient Monument	Deborah Priddy	01223 582720
English Heritage	Estates Surveyor, East	Tim Cockerill	01604 735420 Timothy.Cockerill@english-heritage.org.uk
Inn on the Park	Owner	Wendy Hooper	01727 838246
Ver Valley Society	Chairman	Jane Gardiner	janegardiner@madasafish.com
John O'Conner Grounds Maintenance	Ground maintenance contractor park ranger	Customer care	01727 844638

8. APPENDICES

Appendix 1 – Grounds Maintenance Specification

Verulamium Park Grounds Maintenance Specification

Regime			Standard required								
Amenity grass cutting			Applies to all general grass areas, with grass heights being kept within the range of 25-60 mm. Cuttings not collected								
			Though this item is a performance specification the Contractor will normally cut to the following frequencies.								
Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
-	-	1	3	4	4	4	2	2	2	1	-

Regime			Standard required								
Park Ranger			As a way of promoting the community safety in parks, the Contractor is to provide a Park Rangers in Verulamium Park. The Park Rangers will be required to be present Park from 7.00am to dusk all year round. The Park Rangers will carry out other appropriate ground maintenance duties within the parks, however these duties must not render them unapproachable e.g. tractor driving.								
			<p>Routine duties will include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emptying litter Bins • Speaking to members of the public • Carrying out minor repairs • Cleaning furniture • Assisting with Events • Communication with the Police regarding antisocial behaviour <p>Rangers must wear florescent yellow coats or other highly visible clothing with "Park Ranger" clearly visible from a distance on their back. The Rangers shall be approachable by the public, resolve issues if possible, and should report incidents of anti-social behaviour that they cannot resolve to the Supervising Officer e.g. drug dealing and use, bullying, incidents contrary to the parks byelaws or those that prevent enjoyment of the facilities by other park users. In summary the Rangers should be the 'eyes and ears' of the Council at all times.</p>								
Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
31	28	31	30	31	30	31	31	30	31	30	31

[illegible]

Regime			Standard required											
Hedges			All hedges are to be cut 4 times per year, in May, July, Sept and November. The hedges are to be cut back to the start of the season's growth, and all cuttings collected and taken to a green waste site. Certain species of hedge may not be vigorous enough to require all 4 cuts. Rogue species, growing in the hedges, are to be removed during the cutting operation.											
			Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
			-	-	-	1	-	1	-	1	-	1	-	-

[illegible]

Regime	Standard required											
Cricket pitches	Two cricket pitches are provided for hire by local Cricket Clubs. The maintenance of the squares and outfield requires specialist green keeping skills. Individual wickets are prepared and marked out before each game.											
	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Cut Table		1	2	4	4	4	4	4	4	2	1	
Cut Wicket					8	8	8	8	8			
Cut Boundary			2	2	4	4	4	4	4	2	1	
Set & Mark Boundary				1								
Over Mark Boundary					4	4	4	4	4			
Mark Wicket					4	4	4	4	4			
Spike										1		
Scarify				1	1	1	1	1	1	2		
Roll			1	2	4	4	4	4	4			
Top Dress (Surrey Loam)										1		
Repair Wicket					4	4	4	4	4			
Over Mark Wicket					4	4	4	4	4			
Seed										1		
Fertilise				1								
Spray Selective					1							
Moss Treat (if required)					1							

Regime	Standard required											
Children's play area and adiZone	<p>The children's play area and adiZone receive a number of different inspections and routine maintenance works throughout the year.</p> <p>Daily - The Park Ranger visually inspects the facilities each day to ensure that they are safe and clean</p> <p>Weekly - Ensure security of all fixings and integrity of structures; cleanse all equipment and remove litter, detritus including broken glass.</p> <p>Quarterly – Visually inspect and lubricate all equipment according to manufacturer's guidelines and carry out repairs as needed.</p> <p>Annual Safety Inspection – The Play Area Inspection company conduct in December of each year an inspection of each item of equipment and provides a written report with a risk assessment. The report also sets out any work that is needed to the equipment.</p> <p>The Contractor is required to carry out repairs as and when needed and to cover the cost of the first £100 of any problem.</p>											
	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Daily Check	31	28	31	30	31	30	31	31	30	31	30	31
Weekly Inspection	5	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	5	4	4
Quarterly Inspection	-	1	-	-	1	-	-	1	-	-	1	-
Annual Safety Inspection	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1

Regime	Standard required											
Park's furniture	<p>The Park Ranger will each day inspect the park on his or her rounds. In addition, all furniture is cleaned and graffiti removed as and when needed.</p> <p>Damaged furniture repaired if possible or removed from site immediately if unsafe</p> <p>Other parks furniture, such as bins and signs are to be kept clean and painted as required. Where damage is beyond reasonable repair, then they will be replaced by the Council</p>											
	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
	31	28	31	30	31	30	31	31	30	31	30	31

Regime	Standard required											
Hard surfaces	Hard surfaces include paths and roadways are swept and kept litter and debris free. Weeds and moss are to be removed or treated if needed. In the autumn leaves are also removed as needed. Pot holes will be repaired as and when they occur, and an annual repairs programme is aimed at resurfacing sections of path where the surface is starting to break up.											
	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Sweeping	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
Weed Treatment	-	-	-	-	1	-	1	-	-	1	-	-

Regime	Standard required											
Litter bins and dog bins	All litter and dog bins are to be emptied each day before 10am and as and when required on additional occasions throughout the day to prevent them becoming more than three-quarters full:											
	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1

Regime	Standard required											
General litter	<p>The contract requires that litter and other deleterious are collected and removed in and the Park is kept litter free at all times. This work will normally be carried out by the Park Ranger</p> <p>The specification defines litter among other things as, dog faeces, leaves, any rubbish dropped or left by members of the public and fallen branches.</p>											
	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1

Regime	Standard required											
Summer Meadow	<p>Summer flowering meadows are cut in April cut to 100 mm and again in October to 100mm after plants have set seed.</p> <p>The arisings are removed from site immediately after the April cut and between three and seven days after the October cut. no less than three and no more than seven days after cutting, either as hay or forage material, on the October cut: all proceeds shall accrue to the Contractor. No pesticides or weed killers are used on the Summer Meadow.</p>											
	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Litter Pick	-	-	1	-	1	-	-	-	1	-	1	-
Cut	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-

Regime	Standard required											
Spring Meadow	Spring flowering meadows will require a mid or late summer cut to 100mm after plants have seeded. Arisings are removed from the site between three to seven days after cutting. The meadow should then be cut to 50mm on a monthly basis for a further three cuts and the arisings left on site. No pesticides or weed killers are used on the Spring Meadows.											
	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Litter Pick			1								1	
Cutting				1	1	1	1	1	1	1		

[illegible][illegible]

[illegible][illegible]

[illegible]

Appendix 2 – Conservation Plan

CARE AND CONSERVATION POLICY

St Albans Museums



ST ALBANS
MUSEUMS

PURPOSE

The purpose of the Care and Conservation Policy is to set a framework for:

- The preservation of the collections and buildings in the care of the museum,
- Preventative and remedial conservation of the collections
- The safe use of and access to collections, within the limits of the museum's resources

CONTEXT

The museum aims to improve the care and conditions of all its collection in accordance with Benchmarks in Collections Care, Signposts or other approved standards within the limits of its resources.

The safety and preservation of the collection will be considered from the outset of any plans to alter the displays or storage or modify the buildings.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the Care and Conservation Plan, the Museum's Forward Plan and Emergency Plan. This policy should be reviewed by May 2019.

PERSONNEL

The care of the collections is the responsibility of everyone who works in or visits the museum.

Any concerns regarding the collections should be reported immediately to the curatorial staff.

The museum trains all staff and volunteers who handle the collections in the course of their work. No untrained personnel are allowed to handle items from the collection.

Researchers or other visitors working with the collections will be briefed on how to handle the items they are working on and will be supervised at all times.

Any problems or concerns relating to the care of the collection are referred by the curatorial staff to an appropriately qualified conservator.

The museum will check the suitability of conservators chosen to work or advise on the collections. A professionally accredited conservator or a conservator listed on the Conservation Register will normally be chosen.

No item in the collections will be modified or altered until advice has been obtained from a suitably qualified conservator found through the ICON register.

Only suitably trained and qualified conservators will carry out interventive treatment on objects.

The museum will keep detailed records of all treatments carried out on objects, including the name and contact details of the person or company.

THE BUILDINGS

The museum recognises that the maintenance of its buildings is fundamental to the preservation of both the building and collection and endeavours to keep the buildings in a suitable condition. The museum's collection is stored and displayed in the following buildings. The body responsible for the upkeep of the buildings is listed.

Building	Used for	Owner	Upkeep carried out by
Museum of St Albans	Storage and display	SADC	Museums Operations Manager and Buildings Supervisor (SADC)
Verulamium Museum	Storage and display	SADC	Museums Operations Manager and Buildings Supervisor (SADC)
Sandridge Gate	Storage	SADC	Buildings Supervisor (SADC)

The museum has a Buildings Plan for the upkeep of all buildings which are its responsibility.

The museum's Operations Manager carries out an annual inspection of all buildings and notifies SADC (St Albans District Council) about any remedial or maintenance work required.

THE COLLECTIONS

The museum is aware of the risks to the collection from environmental factors, poor handling, storage and display materials and methods, and of the need to record the condition of the collection. The museum cares for the collections in store, on display and, by setting suitable requirements, on loan.

The details are listed in the Conservation and Collection Care Plan and include:

- monitoring and improving environmental conditions including temperature, relative humidity, light and dust
- managing the threat from pests
- housekeeping
- conservation cleaning of objects on open display
- documentation of the condition of the collection and of any treatments carried out on objects
- storage materials and methods
- display materials and methods
- transport methods

Adopted by St Albans District Council

Richard Shwe

Head of Community Services
9 June 2014

CARE AND CONSERVATION PLAN 2014

St Albans Museums



ST ALBANS
MUSEUMS

CONTENTS

1. Monitoring And Improving Environmental Conditions Including Temperature, Relative Humidity (RH), Light And Dust
2. Managing The Threat From Pests
3. Housekeeping
4. Conservation Cleaning Of Objects On Open Display
5. Documentation Of The Condition Of The Collection And Of Any Treatments Carried Out On Objects
6. Storage Materials And Methods
7. Display Materials And Methods
8. Handling Materials and Methods
9. Transport Methods
10. Loans In
11. Loans Out
12. Workforce Training
13. Plans for Improvement

This plan sets out the actions required to implement the Care and Conservation Policy. It should be read in conjunction with the Forward Plan, Building Plan and Emergency Plan and any other plans affecting the collection and the museum buildings.

It was written in May 2014 and will be due for renewal in May 2019.

1. MONITORING AND IMPROVING ENVIRONMENTAL CONDITIONS

1.1 Temperature and Relative Humidity

The museum monitors and records the temperature and relative humidity (RH) in the storage and display areas.

The museum aims to maintain conditions which are as stable as possible, within the range 12 - 20°C and 45 – 60% RH.

If the results fall outside the desired range, the cause is investigated and action taken to improve conditions.

The current system is an electronic monitoring system using Hanwell dataloggers. Readings are recorded every 15 minutes and automatically uploaded to a software programme which then backs up the readings in a computer file. The readings are examined regularly by the curators. All readings are filed in G:\Radiolog backup and the devices are calibrated by the software company, Hanwell, at 5 yearly intervals.

The museum uses the following to control the environment:

Central heating system – this is set with a thermostat to be within the range 18-21°C

Humidifiers and dehumidifiers are used for specific occasions where the RH is outside acceptable limits. When in use, these machines are inspected daily (humidifiers should be topped up and dehumidifiers emptied).

Items which require extremely dry environments are kept in polythene boxes with a sufficient quantity of silica gel. The silica gel is regularly checked by the curator and replaced with dried silica gel when necessary.

1.2 Light

No objects are exposed to direct sunlight. Items are protected from unnecessary exposure to light. Storage areas are kept dark when not in use.

Ultra violet light is excluded as much as possible. All windows are either blocked off or fitted with UV filter film. Fluorescent lights are fitted with UV filters.

Visible light levels are checked using the museum's light meter whenever the lighting is changed (lights are moved or new bulbs fitted). This is the responsibility of the curator. The results are recorded in G:\Audience Development\Collections Care

Light sensitive material is not left on permanent display.

The museum aims to keep light exposure for very light sensitive material to below 150,000 lux-hours per year and for less sensitive material to below 300,000 lux-hours per year. The museum will remove items from display if light exposure is deemed to be too high.

1.3 Dust

Where possible, the majority of items in the museum's collections are protected from dust by being kept in boxes in the stores or in display cases. Some are covered with Tyvek or cotton sheets or acid-free tissue paper. If items need to be protected with polythene sheet or bubblewrap they are first covered with acid-free tissue paper. Covered objects and items in boxes are clearly marked to identify the object inside.

Dust levels in the museum are controlled by

- Good housekeeping
- Keeping external doors and windows closed whenever possible.
- Using mats to trap dust from shoes at entrances

- Sealing off areas where building work is taking place

It is the museum operation team's responsibility to ensure the measures relating to controlling the environment are in place, communicated and acted upon.

2. MANAGING THE THREAT FROM PESTS

2.1 Quarantine

Any item coming into the museum (even returning items which have been on loan) will be kept separate from the collection until it has been fully examined by a member of staff. Items which have to be stored in the museum awaiting examination will be kept away from the collection or isolated by placing them in a polythene box or wrapping them in polythene sheet. They will be examined as quickly as possible, especially as there is a risk of mould if they are damp.

2.2 Monitoring

Sticky traps are placed in the storage and display areas, along the floors, near doorways and windows, on window sills and occasionally on shelves, to monitor insect activity especially in dark, quiet areas. The traps are checked monthly between February – June and then every two months for the rest of the year (e.g. February, March, April, May, June, August, October, December)

A sketch plan is made of each room, showing the location of the traps. The traps are numbered. Each trap is examined by the curator in a good light using a magnifying lens and the results recorded in G:\Audience Development\Collections Care.

If pests are found which are potentially harmful to the collection or building, the advice of a conservator is sought.

2.3 Prevention

No food or drink is kept in any area where the collections are stored or displayed.

Good housekeeping keeps the museum clean, reducing the risk of infestation by pests.

Windows and doors are kept shut whenever possible. All vents in the walls are protected with mesh screens.

Gloves are worn when handling objects to reduce the possibility of mould growth and pest attack.

Areas which are full of boxes and objects are deep cleaned every year. All boxes and items are removed from shelving, the shelving and walls wiped clean with microfibre cloths and then the items are replaced.

Good ventilation is important for preventing mould and pest infestation. Storage areas are opened up regularly. Items are stored in a way to allow air movement around them. Items are not stacked against external walls.

Any mouldy or pest infested packing material must be thrown out promptly. Any information on it is recorded first.

It is the curators' responsibility to ensure the measures relating to pests are in place, communicated and acted upon.

3. HOUSEKEEPING

No polishes, cleaning agents or sprays are used in the museum without the advice of a curator or conservator.

Synthetic (not feather) dusters are used on walls, lights and ceilings (not objects).

Microfibre cloths (dry or dampened with clean water), brushes and vacuum cleaners are used for cleaning the building.

Housekeeping does not include cleaning objects on open display.

Storage areas:

- Floors are regularly cleaned by a curator.
- Shelves, work surfaces and ledges are wiped down regularly with microfibre cloths by a curator.
- Rubbish bins are emptied as necessary by anyone using the store at the end of their work there.
- Windows are regularly cleaned internally with microfibre cloths by a curator.

Display areas:

- Floors are cleaned regularly by the museum operation team and by a contracted cleaner.
- Cases are wiped with microfibre cloths regularly by the museum operation team.
- Shelves, worksurfaces and ledges are wiped down with microfibre cloths by the museum operation team.
- Rubbish bins are emptied frequently by the museums operation team.
- Windows are regularly cleaned internally with microfibre cloths by a contracted window cleaner.

It is the responsibility of the curators and Operations Manager to ensure the measures relating to housekeeping are in place, communicated and acted upon.

4. CONSERVATION CLEANING OF OBJECTS ON OPEN DISPLAY (OR IN OPEN STORAGE)

In the most part, items are displayed in secure, suitable cases and stored in appropriate boxes. In some cases, items are on open display. These items are carefully monitored and recorded and appropriate action taken when damage or dirt is observed.

Delicate items including oil paintings and gilded frames should only be cleaned by an appropriate conservator.

More robust surfaces may be cleaned using the brush vacuum method (instructions and record sheet can be found in G:\Audience Development\Collections Care

It is the curator's responsibility to ensure the measures relating to conservation cleaning of objects on open display are in place, communicated and acted upon.

5. DOCUMENTATION OF THE CONDITION OF THE COLLECTION AND OF ANY TREATMENTS CARRIED OUT ON OBJECTS

An annual visual inspection of all the collections is carried out. Sensitive or vulnerable items are identified, and appropriate action planned. The museum retains records of every treatment carried out on objects, by in-house staff or conservators. In the case of in-house work, a unique conservation reference number is assigned to each object. Other information about conservation work is included in an object's history file.

Every object loaned from the collection has its condition checked and recorded when it leaves and returns to the museum.

It is the responsibility of the curators and any conservation staff to ensure the measures relating to documentation of the condition of collections and any treatment carried out are in place, communicated and acted upon.

6. STORAGE MATERIALS AND METHODS

The museum is aware that all items should be protected in inert packaging materials in a way which protects the item from chemical or physical damage.

The museum aims to replace any inappropriate boxes and packing materials with acid-free card and tissue paper, polythene, inert styrene or polypropylene boxes and polythene foam.

It is the curator's responsibility to ensure the measures relating to storage materials and methods are in place, communicated and acted upon.

7. DISPLAY MATERIALS AND METHODS

The museum uses secure display cases whenever possible.

Mounts are constructed to provide support for the object and protect it from physical damage during display and handling. No object is permanently changed by its attachment to a mount.

Items on open display are checked by the curator every six months and any deterioration in their condition is recorded.

It is the curator's responsibility to ensure the measures relating to display materials and methods are in place, communicated and acted upon.

8. TRANSPORT METHODS

Items are carried between rooms and buildings in suitably padded containers.

Items always travel with sufficient documentation.

Items are never left unattended in vehicles.

Changes of location are recorded using Object Movement Tickets, according to the procedures set out in the museum's Documentation Procedural Manual.

It is the curator's responsibility to ensure the measures relating to transport methods are in place, communicated and acted upon.

9. LOANS OUT

All requests for loans from the collection will be assessed individually before a decision is reached. The condition of the items, the location, environment and security of the venue, transport and personnel involved will all be reviewed. For particularly valuable items, additional information regarding display cases and security may be requested.

Security, environmental, handling and conservation conditions are stipulated by the museum and agreed with the borrower as part of the loan agreement.

If agreed, the condition of the item to be loaned will be recorded in a form, with photographs showing every angle and with existing damage clearly marked. This form is part of the loan agreement and a copy will accompany the object when it leaves the building.

Every item is checked against the original condition report when it is returned to the museum. The loan and the outcome of the check is recorded on the item's catalogue entry according to the museum's Documentation Procedural Manual.

It is the curator's responsibility to ensure the measures relating to loans out are in place, communicated and acted upon.

10. LOANS IN

The museum treats all incoming loans according to the requirements set out in the loan agreement between it and the lending authority.

The museum will notify the lending authority if there is any change in its circumstances which mean that it can no longer meet the requirements set out in this agreement.

If the lending body does not supply a Condition Check Form for each object, the museum will create its own condition report form.

It is the curator's responsibility to ensure the measures relating to loans in are in place, communicated and acted upon

11. WORKFORCE TRAINING

It is the museum's policy that only people who have received appropriate training should handle items from the collections. This is done through in-house training, by shadowing experienced members of staff and through the provision of clear guidance sheets.

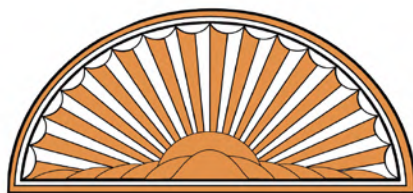
12. PLANS FOR IMPROVEMENT

The museum service is planning to recruit a conservator to run as an independent business using the museum's facilities. We hope that this enterprise will provide much-needed conservation advice about care and storage of the collections.

We aim to continue to repackage objects where necessary in appropriate inert packaging, subject to resources being available.

COLLECTIONS DEVELOPMENT POLICY 2014-2019

St Albans Museums



ST ALBANS
MUSEUMS

CONTENTS

GENERAL STATEMENTS OF ACQUISITION AND DISPOSAL POLICY

1. STATEMENT OF PURPOSE
2. AN OVERVIEW OF CURRENT COLLECTIONS
3. THEMES AND PRIORITIES FOR FUTURE COLLECTION
4. THEMES AND PRIORITIES FOR RATIONALISATION AND DISPOSAL
5. LIMITATIONS ON COLLECTING
6. COLLECTING POLICIES OF OTHER MUSEUMS
7. POLICY REVIEW PROCEDURES
8. ACQUISITIONS NOT COVERED BY THE POLICY
9. ACQUISITION PROCEDURES
10. SPOILIATION
11. REPARATION AND RESTITUTION
12. MANAGEMENT OF ARCHIVES
13. DISPOSAL PROCEDURES

SPECIFIC LOCAL POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

14. ACQUISITIONS
15. ENQUIRIES
16. LOANS
17. DISPOSAL
18. DOCUMENTATION
19. COLLECTIONS CARE
20. ARCHIVES
21. ARCHAEOLOGY
22. NATURAL SCIENCES
23. SOCIAL AND LOCAL HISTORY
24. EDUCATION COLLECTION

St Albans Museums is a directly provided service of St Albans City & District Council [‘the governing body’ in parts 1-12]. There are two museums, Verulamium Museum and the Museum of St Albans, in the meaning of the Accreditation Standard published by Arts Council England. The service also manages historic properties: St Albans Clock Tower; the courtroom and cells of St Albans’ Old Town Hall; Sopwell Ruins and the Roman Mosaic (or ‘Hypocaust’) in Verulamium Park.

The general statements of policy on acquisition and disposal set out in 1-12 below are in accordance with those published by Arts Council England in their Accreditation Standard (2011). The entire policy below was approved in June 2014 by the delegated power of the Head of Community Services, St Albans City and District Council, and is due for review within five years.

The Museums’ governing body, St Albans City & District Council, hereby also adopts the ethical guidance issued by the Museums Association, the *Code of Ethics for Museums 2008*, and intends to adopt subsequent amendments. Museum staff follow the code as an agreed element of their job descriptions.

1. STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

St Albans Museums Service exists *to safeguard the special heritage of St Albans and district, and share it widely*. In doing so it has or will form substantial collections of artefacts, natural specimens, environmental samples, written records, and data.

In building a comprehensive record of the lives of the people of the City & District, St Albans Museums Service will seek to represent all elements of its community.

2. AN OVERVIEW OF THE CURRENT COLLECTIONS

The museum collection is owned by St Albans Museums Service, as part of St Albans City and District Council.

The existing collections, and policies for their future development, are described in more detail later. In summary, the main elements are:

- the residue of Sir John Evans' archaeological collections originally placed in the Hertfordshire County Museum [now Museum of St Albans]
- small quantities of local prehistoric archaeological material
- Late Iron Age and Roman archaeological finds from Verulamium and its hinterland within the City & District boundaries, an area of approximately 200 km². The most significant finds are Late Iron Age burial, cemeteries, coinage and pottery, Roman mosaics and wall plasters, burials, and everyday objects from a type Romano-British town.
- the *in situ* Roman mosaic in Verulamium Park
- Archaeological material from the Late Saxon and later monastic and market town of St Albans
- the fifteenth-century town belfry, the only example in Britain, with its original great bell
- ruins of Sir Richard Lee's house on the site of Sopwell Nunnery, St Albans
- social history collections from the post-medieval thoroughfare, market, and commuter town of St Albans
- Hertfordshire-wide maps, prints, watercolours and drawings from the Lewis Evans collection, including comprehensive material for St Albans to 1900
- an extensive twentieth-century photographic record of St Albans & District, and nineteenth and twentieth century local ephemera
- English trade tools of the period 1700-1950 comprising the Salaman Collection, an important partially published collection.
- the residue of geological, palaeontological, and natural history collections (now a closed collection)

3. THEMES AND PRIORITIES FOR FUTURE COLLECTING

- 3.1** Policies for the future development of the collections are described in more detail in sections 20-24, where closed elements of the collection are also identified.
- 3.2** The Museums Service normally restricts its collecting to the City & District of St Albans. Most collections arise from Verulamium and St Albans in the centre of the District. However the District is a modern political boundary rather than a historical or natural one. The Service may therefore occasionally collect material significant for the understanding and use of its own collections from adjoining districts. The Service will inform the relevant

local museum or archive if it intends to collect outside the District, and not collect in competition with any other museum.

3.3 The Service may passively collect/accept material from adjoining districts with no Museum Service, or whose museums do not collect in a particular subject area, until such time as an acceptable Registered/Accredited Service is established in these areas, when active consideration will be given to the relocation of finds. In the past this practice has usually involved stray archaeological finds from adjacent districts where it seemed desirable that unusual or important material otherwise at risk should enter the public domain.

3.4 The Salaman Tool Collection was collected throughout England and parts of Wales, Scotland and Ireland. Occasional additions may be of national or even international material, but never in competition with other museums.

4. THEMES AND PRIORITIES FOR RATIONALISATION AND DISPOSAL

Each subject area within the museum's collections has its own priorities for rationalisation and disposal and these are described in more detail below in sections 20-24.

Documentation procedures are set out in section 13.

5. LIMITATIONS ON COLLECTING

The museum recognises its responsibility, in acquiring additions to its collections, to ensure that care of collections, documentation arrangements and use of collections will meet the requirements of the Accreditation Standard. It will take into account limitations on collecting imposed by such factors as staffing, storage and care of collection arrangements.

6. COLLECTING POLICIES OF OTHER MUSEUMS

The museum will take account of the collecting policies of other museums and other organisations collecting in the same or related areas or subject fields. It will consult with these organisations where conflicts of interest may arise or to define areas of specialism, in order to avoid unnecessary duplication and waste of resources.

Specific reference is made to other Hertfordshire Museums; Hertfordshire Archives & Local Studies; and Museums Luton

7. POLICY REVIEW PROCEDURE

The Collections Development Policy will be published and reviewed from time to time, at least once every five years. The date when the policy is next due for review is noted above.

Arts Council England will be notified of any changes to the Collections Development Policy, and the implications of any such changes for the future of existing collections.

8. ACQUISITIONS NOT COVERED BY THE POLICY

Acquisitions outside the current stated policy will only be made in very exceptional circumstances, and then only after proper consideration by the governing body of the museum itself, having regard to the interests of other museums.

9. ACQUISITION PROCEDURES

- a. The museum will exercise due diligence and make every effort not to acquire, whether by purchase, gift, bequest or exchange, any object or specimen unless the governing body or responsible officer is satisfied that the museum can acquire a valid title to the item in question.
- b. In particular, the museum will not acquire any object or specimen unless it is satisfied that the object or specimen has not been acquired in, or exported from, its country of origin (or any intermediate country in which it may have been legally owned) in violation of that country's laws. (For the purposes of this paragraph 'country of origin' includes the United Kingdom).
- c. In accordance with the provisions of the UNESCO 1970 Convention on the Means of Prohibiting and Preventing the Illicit Import, Export and Transfer of Ownership of Cultural Property, which the UK ratified with effect from November 1 2002, and the Dealing in Cultural Objects (Offences) Act 2003, the museum will reject any items that have been illicitly traded. The governing body will be guided by the national guidance on the responsible acquisition of cultural property issued by the Department for Culture, Media and Sport in 2005.
- d. So far as biological and geological material is concerned, the museum will not acquire by any direct or indirect means any specimen that has been collected, sold or otherwise transferred in contravention of any national or international wildlife protection or natural history conservation law or treaty of the United Kingdom or any other country, except with the express consent of an appropriate outside authority.
- e. The museum will not acquire archaeological antiquities (including excavated ceramics) in any case where the governing body or responsible officer has any suspicion that the circumstances of their recovery involved a failure to follow the appropriate legal procedures.
- f. Any exceptions to the above clauses 9a,9b, 9c, or 9e will only be because the museum is:
 - acting as an externally approved repository of last resort for material of local (UK) origin
 - acquiring an item of minor importance that lacks secure ownership history but in the best judgement of experts in the field concerned has not been illicitly traded
 - acting with the permission of authorities with the requisite jurisdiction in the country of origin
 - in possession of reliable documentary evidence that the item was exported from its country of origin before 1970

In these cases the museum will be open and transparent in the way it makes decisions and will act only with the express consent of an appropriate outside authority.

- g. As the museum holds or intends to acquire human remains from any period, it will follow the procedures in the 'Guidance for the care of human remains in museums' issued by DCMS in 2005.

10. SPOILATION

The museum will use the statement of principles 'Spoliation of Works of Art during the Nazi, Holocaust and World War II period', issued for non-national museums in 1999 by the Museums and Galleries Commission.

11. THE REPATRIATION AND RESTITUTION OF OBJECTS AND HUMAN REMAINS

The disposal of human remains from museums in England, Northern Ireland and Wales will follow the procedures in the 'Guidance for the care of human remains in museums'.

12. MANAGEMENT OF ARCHIVES

As the museum holds archives, including photographs and printed ephemera, its governing body will be guided by the Code of Practice on Archives for Museums and Galleries in the United Kingdom (third edition, 2002).

13. DISPOSAL PROCEDURES

Disposal preliminaries:

- a. The governing body will ensure that the disposal process is carried out openly and with transparency.
- b. By definition, the museum has a long-term purpose and holds collections in trust for society in relation to its stated objectives. The governing body therefore accepts the principle that sound curatorial reasons for disposal must be established before consideration is given to the disposal of any items in the museum's collection.
- c. The museum will confirm that it is legally free to dispose of an item and agreements on disposal made with donors will be taken into account.
- d. When disposal of a museum object is being considered, the museum will establish if it was acquired with the aid of an external funding organisation. In such cases, any conditions attached to the original grant will be followed. This may include repayment of the original grant and a proportion of the proceeds if the item is disposed of by sale.

Motivation for disposal and method of disposal

- e. When disposal is motivated by curatorial reasons, the procedures outlined in paragraphs 13g-13o will be followed and the method of disposal may be by gift, sale or exchange.
- f. The museum will not undertake disposal motivated principally by financial reasons

The disposal decision-making process

- g. Whether the disposal is motivated either by curatorial or financial reasons, the decision to dispose of material from the collections will be taken by the governing body only after full consideration of the reasons for disposal. Other factors including the public benefit, the implications for the museum's collections and collections held by museums and other organisations collecting the same material or in related fields will be considered. External expert advice will be obtained and the views of stakeholders such as donors, researchers, local and source communities and others served by the museum will also be sought.

Responsibility for disposal decision-making

- h. A decision to dispose of a specimen or object, whether by gift, exchange, sale or destruction (in the case of an item too badly damaged or deteriorated to be of any use for the purposes of the collections or for reasons of health and safety), will be the responsibility of the governing body of the museum acting on the advice of professional curatorial staff, and not of the curator of the collection acting alone.

Use of proceeds of sale

- i. Any monies received by the museum governing body from the disposal of items will be applied for the benefit of the collections. This normally means the purchase of further acquisitions. In exceptional cases, improvements relating to the care of collections in order to meet or exceed Accreditation requirements relating to the risk of damage to and deterioration of the collections may be justifiable. Any monies received in compensation for the damage, loss or destruction of items will be applied in the same way. Advice on those cases where the monies are intended to be used for the care of collections will be sought from the Arts Council England.
- j. The proceeds of a sale will be ring-fenced so it can be demonstrated that they are spent in a manner compatible with the requirements of the Accreditation standard.

Disposal by gift or sale

- k. Once a decision to dispose of material in the collection has been taken, priority will be given to retaining it within the public domain, unless it is to be destroyed. It will therefore be offered in the first instance, by gift or sale, directly to other Accredited Museums likely to be interested in its acquisition.
- l. If the material is not acquired by any Accredited Museums to which it was offered directly as a gift or for sale, then the museum community at large will be advised of the intention to dispose of the material, normally through an announcement in the Museums Association's Museums Journal, and in other specialist journals where appropriate.
- m. The announcement relating to gift or sale will indicate the number and nature of specimens or objects involved, and the basis on which the material will be transferred to another institution. Preference will be given to expressions of interest from other Accredited Museums. A period of at least two months will be allowed for an interest in acquiring the material to be expressed. At the end of this period, if no expressions of interest have been received, the museum may consider disposing of the material to other interested individuals and organisations giving priority to organisations in the public domain.

Disposal by exchange

- n. The museum will not dispose of items by exchange.

Documenting disposal

- o. Full records will be kept of all decisions on disposals and the items involved and proper arrangements made for the preservation and/or transfer, as appropriate, of the documentation relating to the items concerned, including photographic records where practicable in accordance with SPECTRUM Procedure on deaccession and disposal.

SPECIFIC LOCAL POLICIES

14. ACQUISITION

- 14.1** Prospective acquisitions which bear significant resource implications will be reviewed by a working group staff including curators and other members of the museum team.
- 14.2** No fire-arms of any kind will be accepted without reference to the Museums & Heritage Officer. Weapons will only be accepted in exceptional circumstances and any fire-arms accepted will be kept in accordance with fire-arms law
- 14.3** Museum donations offered by minors (under 18 years of age) will only be accepted after consultation with the donor's parents / guardians.
- 14.4** Donors will be apprised of the potential financial value of their donation if appears that it may exceed £100 (see also 14.2 below)
- 14.5** Material taken into the collection must be suitable for public display, have potential for research or be of educational value.
- 14.6** Where possible all relevant documentation and provenance must be acquired to accompany the object

15. ENQUIRIES

- 15.1** The Museums Service will operate an enquiry service in all sections. It shall be the policy of the Museums Service, where appropriate, to pass on to another relevant museum service, Herts Archives & Local Studies, Hertfordshire Historic Environment Record or the Portable Antiquities Scheme, information concerning potentially significant material brought in as enquiries from outside the District, or offered for sale.
- 15.2** The Service will not value works of art or specimens brought in as enquiries, unless for purposes of acquisition by the Service, in which case at least one independent valuation will normally be obtained for items likely to exceed £100.
- 15.3** The Museums Service reserves the right not to provide written descriptions of an object where the officer concerned has reasonable ground to believe that such a description will be used as validation/authentication of material for the purpose of sale.
- 15.4** The Service reserves the right to refuse to identify or otherwise give an opinion on any object where a provenance is not supplied and the possibility remains that an object has been stolen, illegally imported, acquired or retained in contravention of British nature conservation, ancient monuments, antiquities, or other legislation.
- 15.5** Notwithstanding Sections 14.3-4, the Service may, in confidence, identify portable antiquities at the request of the Department of Culture, Media & Sport and its agent the British Museum under the Portable Antiquities Scheme.

16. LOANS

- 16.1** Loans from the collections shall have due consideration to the following:
 - that the material is properly insured against loss or for the purposes of repair if damaged

- it will provide public or other benefit which justifies the expense of the arrangement and carries an acceptable level of risk to the object/s
- that the curatorial staff are satisfied with the environmental conditions of the receiving institution and that the objects are in a fit state to travel and be displayed
- that the security of the object is satisfactory
- that the owner of the material gives consent in the case of material not owned or held in trust by St Albans District Council (e.g. a loan)
- that the objects required for loan are not crucial to the permanent displays
- the loan will promote and enhance the reputation of SADC
- the loan will have provision for annual inspection and review

Requests for loans will only be considered from:

- institutions who meet the MLA Accreditation standard or who can demonstrate that they are working towards the standard
- foreign museums who are members of a recognised association in their own country
- other reputable heritage bodies
- specialist providers for e.g. photographic or conservation purposes
- organisation offering material or promotional benefits
- members of a corporate loans or membership scheme administered by the museum

Requests from individuals will not normally be considered

The borrower and his employees and agents must be fully conversant with St Albans Museums' *Conditions of Loan*

- 16.2** Loans will only be accepted into the collection after due attempt has been made to acquire material by donation and after due consideration of storage, conservation and curation implications, including insurance and other long-term costs. They shall clearly fall within the Collections Policy, and there shall be a specific purpose in view, normally display. Written fixed-term agreements shall be made with the lender.
- 16.3** All loans accepted into the care of the Museums Service shall be subject to the same conditions of curatorial care as if they were the property of St Albans Museums Service.
- 16.4** Any incoming loan will have an object entry form.
- 16.5** The Service will seek to return items on long-term loan which it cannot display.

Policy

- 16.5.1** *During the period of this policy existing loans will be identified as far as possible through a search of correspondence and formal documentation records. They will be individually reviewed and renegotiated where appropriate.*

17. DISPOSAL

17.1 Disposals from the collections will only take place in the following cases:

- where the material falls outside the collecting policy of the Museums Service, including mass-produced modern material where the only local association is through use
- where the item is too badly damaged or deteriorated to be of use for the collection
- where the museum has multiple duplicates
- fragmentary archaeological material of low significance (often unstratified) which has been fully studied and recorded, and where the museum has better examples. A voucher sample may be retained

17.2 The Museums Service's duty of care to its collections cannot be maintained in overcrowded conditions. Recommendations for disposal will be considered by a working group of the curatorial and collections staff, as well as other members of the museum team, working to the guidelines set out above and with reference to the Documentation Procedural Manual.

18. DOCUMENTATION

18.1 Good documentation is vital to the running of museums. Its essential purposes are: to establish the identity of objects in the collection; record essential information relating to them; to allow rapid search without physical handling; and as an essential aspect of security and audit.

18.2 The Museum Service has a *Documentation Manual*, which includes an action plan. The documentation manual explains clearly the main procedures, areas of priority and points of good practice. The following points are explored in greater depth in the *Documentation Manual*.

18.3 The Museums' documentation will be maintained:

- from 1997, on registers for Verulamium and the Museum of St Albans, assigned, year by year, the numbers yyyy.1-4,999 for archaeology, yyyy.5,000-9,999 for social history, and yyyy.10,000-14,999 for natural history
- on an in-house local computer network, employing a purpose-built relational database. Currently VERNON is used, and there are in excess of 40,000 recorded items on the database
- for pre-1997 material, on a bound word-processed copy of the computer documentation, once the data is adequately checked to act as a register
- on existing card indexes until in practice these are found to be redundant. No new record or amendment will be added to the card indexes.

- for donations, on a copy of the MDA Entry Form. Related correspondence will be kept in a history file for the object.
- in history files where there is sufficient extrinsic information on objects to warrant them.

18.4 All items in the Museums' care should be entered into the VERNON documentation system *except*:

- loans and enquiries
- text, graphics, and photographic materials generated within the service since c 1960
- the working library
- educational (e.g. handling) material
- bulk finds in the excavation archives, except in exceptional circumstances
- special finds in excavation archives whose final destination is undecided. Such finds will normally possess a separate site designation.

18.5 New acquisitions will be entered into the documentation system without delay

18.6 Backlog will generally be added to the database in subject groups, taking a view of the importance of the material and other factors such as the availability of volunteer staff

18.7 No object in the collections should be displayed, lent, conserved or photographed, until it has been fully accessioned

18.8 A history file will be maintained for objects which justify one

18.9 Digital storage and visual cataloguing for the image collections, including paintings, prints, drawings and photographs, will be through the Services IBase database, until a complete integration with the data of the VERNON system can be achieved.

19. COLLECTIONS CARE

19.1 Long-term preservation of the collections requires a suitable and stable environment in stores and displays, archival-quality storage and display materials, proper storage equipment, and good handling, loan, and security procedures.

19.2 The curatorial staff will maintain a constant record of the temperature and relative humidity of all museum displays and stores. Regular spot checks will be carried out on visible light and UV levels, and insect traps will be maintained in strategic areas of each building. The source of particulate and other pollution will be investigated on an *ad hoc* basis. Where conditions are unsatisfactory for the type of material being displayed or stored, or where improvements are identifiable, the curatorial staff will take action.

19.3 The Curators, or a consultant conservator in the case of special groups of material, will identify areas for improvement and the optimum use of storage space, and recommend action. Improvement in these areas should be regarded as a permanent aspect of the Museum Service's work.

19.4 Materials and furniture used in the museums should normally be of the quality used in the National Museums and Galleries; compromises are a false economy. Opportunities should be taken to replace materials and structures which could harm the collections through such processes as acid decay.

19.5 Storage space throughout the service is scarce. The curatorial staff will therefore confer with a view to disposing of objects from the core and teaching collections which have deteriorated or are of doubtful value. 'Disposal' in this context includes such mechanisms as transfer, and will follow para 13 above.

19.6 In addition to monitoring the Museum environment and storage/display conditions, the curatorial staff will view all prospective acquisitions, and may recommend refusal on conservation grounds, and may insist on treatment before it enters the collection.

19.7 The rolling programme of preventative conservation will be maintained. Plans should identify priorities for active conservation of individual items or groups of material, on the basis of the threat posed to the objects, and their importance.

19.8 In addition, where necessary, active conservation will be undertaken to prepare objects for display purposes, and on material submitted by other museum authorities.

19.9 Handling and transport

- Objects should be handled as little as possible, and normally with gloved hands.
- Wherever possible, objects should be lifted and moved in padded containers (trays, baskets, trolleys, etc.), rather than lifted directly.
- Packing for transport, and transport itself, should be undertaken with the advice of the curatorial staff, and preferably carried out or supervised by staff who have attended a short course in handling and packaging.

19.10 Disaster plan

- A separate *Disaster Plan* is available. It identifies the risks associated with each of the buildings, and the procedures to be used in each case.
- Further general risks posed by buildings (for example from overhead pipework) will be reviewed from time to time by the Operations Manager in collaboration with the curatorial staff.

20. ARCHIVES

20.1 Policy guidance on the acquisition of archives is outlined in para 11 above

20.2 The bulk of St Albans City & District Archives has been physically transferred to Hertfordshire Archives & Local Studies [formerly Hertfordshire County Record Office]. Where there is doubt on the proper home of a paper document, the curator will liaise with Hertfordshire Archives & Local Studies.

20.3 When modern documents are deposited in bulk, the curator will agree with the donor an acceptable means for disposing of unwanted items prior to accession.

21. ARCHAEOLOGY

21.1 The Museum Service's archaeological material is largely housed at the Verulamium Museum and at Sandridge Gate Business Centre and forms the bulk of the current collections. The Verulamium Museum was founded in 1939. Initially the collections were those from the excavations conducted by the Wheelers within the Roman Town. These have subsequently been added to by further excavations and the inclusion of the archaeological collections from the Hertfordshire County Museum, now the Museum of St Albans, in 1956.

21.2 Acceptance of Archaeological Archives.

21.2.1 Development-led archaeological evaluation and excavation under the guidelines supplied by the Department of the Environment's *Planning & Policy Guidance No. 16* 1990 [PPG 16] has increasingly led to the offer of archives [the totality of records and objects from an archaeological intervention] which do not conform to the priorities laid out in 21.4-8, and/or contain material of little archaeological value. Such material will usually originate from excavation agencies outside the control of St Albans Museums.

21.2.2 Following consultation with Hertfordshire County Council, the SADC District Archaeologist, and other archaeological agencies and repositories in the County, the Museums Service will from time to time issue guidance on the expected standard of preparation for material to be deposited with SADC. This will emphasise:

- that SADC reserves the right to refuse all or part of the archive
- that SADC may request a once-for-all payment, based on volume, at the time of deposit; and that liability for it should normally be a matter for negotiation between the developer and the excavating agency, in advance of excavation.
- that there is a strong presumption against the preservation of 100% of bulk finds (such as tile and animal bone), especially from unstratified contexts. The right is reserved to sample such collections on a scientific basis. In the case of material not owned by the City & District of St Albans this will be carried out only after due consideration with the legal owners.

21.2.3 Where objects of national importance found within the District have been acquired by the British Museum or other institutions, the Museum Service may endeavour to obtain them on loan or commission high-quality replicas

21.3 General Archaeological Priorities

21.3.1 Although the collections are based around those from the Roman town of Verulamium they include material of all periods. Throughout, however, the collections are weak in material from outside the pre-1974 St Albans City boundary.

Policy Statement

21.3.2 *Archaeological survey and fieldwork will be used to generate material from areas of the District outside the pre-1974 City boundary.*

21.4 Prehistoric

21.4.1 The collection under-represents all prehistoric material, particularly prior to the Late Iron Age. Similarly, little is known of the location of sites.

Policy Statements

21.4.2 *The under-representation of prehistoric material within the collections is a matter for concern and a priority for future collecting. Apart from the passive collection of all 'stray' finds, the opportunity should be taken to collect data through survey and fieldwork where possible.*

21.4.3 *All finds of the period should be pursued, whether by 'passive' collection of stray finds or by active fieldwork. A particular priority should be the acquisition of coins of the Verulamion mint and other significant metalwork.*

21.5 Roman

21.5.1 This is the strongest area of the collections. The Verulamium collections are of national importance though there are recognisable gaps in the area of 'luxury' items. Although Verulamium is one of the best known Roman towns in Britain we still know relatively little about its hinterland and this is reflected in the collections.

Policy Statements

21.5.2 *The Service will seek to acquire the archive from archaeological interventions in and around Verulamium and its cemeteries.*

21.5.3 *The passive collection of casual finds from throughout the district should continue. Where possible active fieldwork should be undertaken in rural areas to identify sites and to provide further data on those already known.*

21.5.4 *Acquisition of material from the hinterland of Verulamium should continue. In particular this should include material from out-lying villas and other rural sites, and products from Verulamium-region kiln sites.*

21.6 Saxon

21.6.1 The Museums' collections are very weak in all material of this period (perhaps reflecting its material culture or its true extent). We still have limited knowledge of the immediate post-Roman history of Verulamium, the founding of the Abbey and the early origins of St Albans.

Policy Statements

21.6.2 *Full attention should be given to fieldwork as a means of identifying Saxon and early medieval sites.*

21.6.3 *Every opportunity should be taken to collect material of this period from throughout the District*

21.7 Medieval

21.7.1 Excavations within the medieval town have provided a considerable amount of data in terms of collected material. There is still a need to locate and explore the pre-twelfth century town. Excavations at the Abbey have provided a considerable body of material from the religious centre. Our knowledge of the hinterland of St Albans is still very weak.

Policy Statements

21.7.2 *The passive collection of all casual small finds should be continued.*

21.7.3 *Attention should be given to fieldwork and survey and to the recording of buildings especially in and around existing or former villages*

21.8 Post-medieval sites and buildings

- 21.8.1 Fieldwork should record post-medieval buildings, deposits and finds wherever this can be done without jeopardising the investigation or preservation of earlier deposits. The recording of post-medieval buildings and archaeology in the District has been relatively slight, with few significant acquisitions resulting.

Policy statement

- 21.8.2 *More excavation and recording of post-medieval archaeology and buildings should be encouraged, and the Museum Service will attempt to acquire and use the archives which result.*

21.9 Excavation history

- 21.9.1 The process and location of excavations and other means of archaeological discovery is of increasing interest to the museum's public. The Service will actively collect archival material, such as photographs, letters, or ephemera, and make oral history recordings relating to past campaigns of excavation at Verulamium / St Albans.

21.10 Human remains

- 21.10.1 St Albans Museums Service will, under the terms of Home Office Exhumation Licences, store, study, and display human skeletal material from archaeological contexts within its collecting area. In the great majority of cases excavation will have been saved this material from damage/destruction or uncontrolled dispersal in the course of development. Normally material will be held in store until it can conveniently be studied; subsequently it will be reburied with appropriate rites. Samples may be retained for display or if they have strong pathological significance. *See paras 9g and 11*
- 21.10.2 In these matters, and especially as regards the display of human remains, a sensitive approach will be maintained and current best practice in the archaeological and museum professions closely observed. Responsibility in this area lies with the Curator of Archaeology and the District Archaeologist

21.11 Foreign Material (closed collection)

- 21.11.1 The collections include small assemblages of material from Ireland, and from Egypt, Cyprus and other Mediterranean areas. These objects were acquired from the Hertfordshire County Museum in 1955 having been collected by past residents of St Albans.

Policy Statement

- 21.11.2 *No more continental material will be collected, unless, exceptionally, comparative material is needed for the Roman collections. Existing objects will be retained.*

22 NATURAL SCIENCES

22.1 Introduction

The Museums Service's Natural Sciences collections are housed at the Museum of St Albans and in the Sandridge Gate Depot Store. The Natural Science Collections are largely 'historic' in nature, the majority of the material being derived from the Hertfordshire County Museum and the collecting activities of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Substantial purchases were made, for example, as late as the 1940's

for educational purposes but no large and/or important groups have been given to the Museum in recent years. More recent donations have been largely of individual items. Field collecting has ceased.

22.2 Existing collections

22.2.1 British Vertebrates (closed collection)

The current vertebrate collection consists of 300 mounted specimens and associated field material, 200 microscope preparations of vertebrate histology, 200 fish in spirit and 1200 birds eggs. There is little documentation associated with these collections, which are mostly 'historic' in nature. There is also a small collection of osteological material.

22.2.2 Invertebrates (closed collection)

The current collections consist of 17,500 lepidoptera (including important regional and national collections) 5,000 other insects (including the important Victorian county collections) and 5,000 mollusca.

22.2.3 Botany (closed collection)

Although a large section of the vascular plant herbarium (including most of the county flora of 1832) was destroyed in the 1950s much important material is still extant. The County herbarium function passed to Hitchin Museum during the 1950s. Collections of bryophytes, fungi and other non vascular cryptograms have been transferred to North Hertfordshire Museum Service.

22.2.4 Earth Sciences

The petrology, mineralogy and palaeontology collections comprise: a representative collection of major British rock types and local building stones; a small collection of minerals, many of them unprovenanced; and a good collection of fossils representing the local Chalk and Pleistocene deposits, together with characteristic non-local British material of all periods

22.3 Legislation

See paragraph 9d above

Policy Statement

22.4 *The natural history collections are effectively closed and active collecting will not usually be undertaken. The existing historical collections will be maintained in the best possible conditions; but for some areas of the collection countywide developments may suggest the further loan or transfer of material elsewhere in future.*

23 SOCIAL AND LOCAL HISTORY

23.1 The Museum Service's social history section is based in the Museum of St Albans with outlying stores at SADC Depot, Sandridge Road. The social history section is responsible for both social and local history as well as fine and decorative arts. The current collections contain the following elements:

23.1.1 Hertfordshire County Museum 1898-1956 As the first Museum in the County, a very wide range of material relating to the whole of the County of Hertfordshire and not merely St Albans was collected. Much of the material is unprovenanced, and many other items have, been passed on to the appropriate museum within the County since 1956. Where material forms part of a discrete collection this has been maintained intact (e.g. Lewis Evans Collection). The main body of the collections include a number of small groups of material such as:

- Hodgson Collection of silver spoons (closed collection)
- Curtis Collection of fans (closed collection)
- Lewis Evans Collection of books, pocket compasses and music staves (closed collection)
- Lewis Evans collections of maps, prints and drawings
- Evan Roberts Collection of watches (closed collection)

23.1.2 St Albans City Museum 1956-89. The most significant addition to the collections during this period was the purchase of the Salaman Collection of trade tools in 1969.

23.1.3 Museum of St Albans 1989 – present. The policy of the Museum of St Albans will be to collect material of local provenance, i.e. items used or made within the City and District of St Albans.

23.2 General

23.2.1 Much past collecting has been of a passive nature, and the current collections reflect a distorted picture of the City's material culture, being biased towards items small or light enough to be carried into the Museum or which were considered 'interesting' by the general public. There was no programme of active collecting or recording. In this way, for example, the craft trades are well represented at the expense of industrial trades and service industries, costume is represented by fine and fashionable female garments rather than male working clothes, and fine ceramics rather than everyday crockery. Many objects were collected without adequate provenance.

23.2.2 Documentation of the paper and photographic collections through digitisation has progressed well in the past five years, but social history objects have not been so recorded.

Policy Statements

23.2.3 *The Museums Service's view of the District's local history will include social history in the broadest sense. It will record the history of the urban and rural environments, local agriculture, industry, politics and the experiences of work, leisure, home and personal life. Attention should be given to collecting and recording the experience of the Italian, Asian, and other minority communities in St Albans.*

23.2.4 *Collection over such a wide field could easily overwhelm the Service's existing resources. The emphasis in collecting for twentieth century and contemporary subjects should shift where possible from objects towards photograph, film, sound recording and printed ephemera. Mass-produced twentieth century three-dimensional objects will be collected with caution, and with special attention to the quality of local provenance. The Service will take every opportunity to encourage co-operative collecting with other Hertfordshire museums, archives and SADC Planning Department, in order to reduce unnecessary duplication of social and local history holdings.*

23.2.5 *Social history objects should be the subject of the next round of digital imaging, as an aid to documentation and use.*

23.2.6 *Where not part of discrete collections, material from areas outside the District will be transferred to the relevant registered Museum. Where this is not possible, such material will be held 'in trust'.*

23.3 Local Trades and Industry

23.3.1 The collections are particularly weak in this area. There is, for example, little material from the brick makers noted by Dickens in Bernards Heath, coats made by Nicholson's of Hatfield Road and shoes from the Lees factory. In general twentieth century industry from the City is under-represented.

Policy Statement

23.3.2 *Collection of material from local trades and industries is a Service priority. This should include not only the objects associated with these trades both in terms of tools and the finished objects but also all associated written and printed material and oral reminiscence.*

23.4 Costume

23.4.1 The collection of costume has grown haphazardly and although it contains some fine items is not representative of the everyday wear of any particular period or class.

Policy Statement

23.4.2 *Costume shall be collected to provide a broad reflection of social classes in the district, with particular emphasis on male and female working clothes, leisure wear and the products of the City's clothing manufacturers. Costume made for a local event, e.g. the Pageant, or in local factories will be a priority. During the course of this policy the costume collection will be documented and identified in greater detail.*

23.5 Dolls and Toys

23.5.1 The collections range from dolls of the eighteenth century but include few items with a local provenance

Policy Statement

23.5.2 *Future collection should be restricted to important items with a clear local association.*

23.6 Farm Vehicles and Implements (closed collection)

23.6.1 The collections include a number of large agricultural vehicles which cannot be displayed at present. The Salaman Collection contains many agricultural hand tools. Other agricultural collections are slight: photographs, reminiscence, costume and printed ephemera.

Policy Statement

23.6.2 *Given the difficulty of storing and displaying the material, and the availability of collections elsewhere, further large objects will not normally be collected. Vehicles related to 'core' themes of the collections will be retained (e.g. wagon by George Casbon of Barley, items with clear St Albans & District associations) unless appropriate storage is offered elsewhere, but others will be transferred under the disposal procedures in para 12. Agricultural tools may be collected for the Salaman Collection; and photographic, oral and other records of the District's agricultural past will be actively collected*

23.7 Furniture

23.7.1 The collection of furniture includes items from the civic past of the City, but local domestic items are poorly represented.

Policy Statement

23.7.2 *Space is a problem in collecting these items but this is an area where future acquisitions reflecting all aspects of the life of the District are a priority. Collecting will be restricted to items with a very strong local association.*

23.8 Decorative Arts

23.8.1 In metalwork, ceramics and glass the Service holds small, but representative collections of general interest rather than of local relevance.

Policy Statement

23.8.2 *Material with a strong local association, including that made after 1945, shall be actively collected.*

23.9 Maps, prints, drawings, and paintings

23.9.1 The Service holds a particularly fine collection of maps, prints, and drawings relating to the County and acquired/collected by the curators of the Hertfordshire County Museum. St Albans and surrounding settlements are particularly well represented though not completely comprehensive, even in maps and prints. The collections date from the eighteenth century onwards but there is a lack of post-1920 material. There are few oil paintings and works by locally significant artists, the result of the concerns of the County Museum.

Policy Statements

23.9.2 *This material will be retained and items relating to St Albans and district will be actively collected. In particular, gaps in the collections shall be filled, by purchase where necessary. Such material will include local views or works of local artists such as J H Buckingham, F G Kitton, H G Moon, E A Phipson, C Holmes Winter, H Miton Wilson, Robert Groves, and others. Local subjects by better-known artists including Harry Hine, Cornelius and John Varley will be sought, as will work by Louis Wain illustrating his years at Napsbury Hospital. Works by Sir George Clausen should relate to his Childwick Green period, and those by F O Salisbury to his residence at Harpenden. The chronological gap of 1920- present day in the collection should be filled where possible.*

23.9.3 *During the term of this policy a campaign of documentation and improved storage will attempt to clarify the extent of the Service's holdings in this field. The importance of the Lewis Evans Collection material relating to Hertfordshire outside the City & District will be investigated, and external funds may be sought for its conservation.*

23.10 Numismatics

23.10.1 The Museum has a good collection of Hertfordshire Trade Tokens but is not comprehensive in St Albans material.

Policy Statement

23.10.2 *St Albans trade tokens will be collected when the opportunity to acquire good specimens arises.*

23.11 Photographs

23.11.1 The collection includes substantial amounts of photographic material relating to St Albans in the late-nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Collecting during recent years has filled many gaps, but there remains little before 1880, or for the wider district.

Policy Statement

23.11.2 *Photographic material relating to the District, in particular early material, and the area outside St Albans will be actively collected.*

23.11 Other Printed Material

23.7.3 The Museum has a wide collection of ephemera, with particular strengths in political posters from c. 1840, theatre bills, chap books, mourning cards, WWII official notices etc. There is also a collection of bound copies of various local newspapers covering the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries.

Policy Statement

23.7.4 *Printed items will be actively collected in consultation with the Herts County Libraries Local Studies Collection which holds much similar material. The Service will seek books and pamphlets relating to St Albans and district, and to its printing industry, from the Boke of St Albans to the Campfield Press.*

23.8 Residues of transferred collections (closed collections)

23.8.1 The collections of Arms and Armour are a legacy the Ball Collection held by the Hertfordshire County Museum from the 1920s until the 1950s. Although withdrawn by the 1950s the collection had attracted other local donations.

23.8.2 Ethnographic material previously held has been passed to Ipswich Museums' Ethnology Department, though some items have been retained as representing St Albans citizens' past activities such as campaigns in India.

23.8.3 Hertfordshire Regimental items have mostly been passed to Hitchin Museum

23.14 Salaman Collection of trade tools

23.14.1 This is the most important single group of objects in the history collections, and was purchased from Raphael Salaman in 1969. It was assembled by trade rather than by locality and is drawn from all over the country. The collection is therefore national in scope and importance. Salaman used the collection, and other material, as the basis for his *Dictionary of Woodworking Tools* 1975, and *Dictionary of Leatherworking Tools* 1986, where many of the more significant items in the collection are illustrated.

Policy Statements

23.14.2 *The Salaman Collection has been removed from display (2010) pending developments at the Museum of St Albans which will allow it to be redisplayed while freeing the principal gallery and access ways to other areas.*

23.14.3 *It remains a collecting area though this is not a strong priority in view of the current strength of the collection.*

23.14.4 *Emphasis will be placed on collecting from urban trades (for example the building trades) which are least well represented in public collections here and elsewhere, and where the survival of tools is often poor.*

23.14.5 *Contemporary material will be selectively collected to illustrate modern developments in tool manufacture and use. Other tools which illustrate specific aspects of history, design, construction or use will also be individually acquired.*

23.15 Film

23.15.1 The Museum Service has very limited collections of moving image material made in, or depicting, St Albans. There is no comprehensive list of such material, whether in private or public ownership.

Policy Statements

23.15.2 *Research will be carried out to identify films depicting, made in and otherwise related to St Albans district, and digital copies made where possible. Further efforts will be made to document and obtain the work of Arthur Melbourne-Cooper.*

23.15.3 *Original film stock will be transferred to the Hertfordshire Film Archive held by the East Anglian Film Archive, and copies obtained for the Museum Service's use.*

23.16 Twentieth century collecting and contemporary recording

23.16.1 The collections of post-1930 material are have been augmented by recent collecting. The Museum Service has devoted considerable time to recording change within St Albans over the past 15 years, resulting in exhibitions on *Food, Domestic Interiors* and the *Home Front*. But much more remains to be done.

Policy Statements

23.16.2 *The retrospective collection of twentieth century life in the district is a Service priority, while it remains a living memory. The selective recording of contemporary life should be designed reduce the need for major retrospective collecting campaigns in the future.*

23.16.3 *The Museums Service will attempt to collect and document both the twentieth century and contemporary life of the District. An integrated approach is favoured, combining material evidence with sound, video, photographic and other forms of record.*

23.16.4 *The Museums Service will record, collect and archive objects, ephemera and oral history from local minority groups, especially the Italian and Asian communities.*

23.17 Building Records

23.17.1 The Museums Service holds the results of photographic building surveys of St Albans City Centre and similar surveys are held by the Planning Department.

Policy Statement

23.17.2 *Over the term of this policy the Museums Service will liaise with the Planning Department with the object of producing a unified listing of these and other historic buildings records*

24 EDUCATION COLLECTION

The Museums Service recognises the public demand for, and educational potential of, objects which can be freely handled and examined in the museum. Specially collected material, and selected objects from the accessioned collections cover most periods outlined in the History National Curriculum and can be used as recommended elements in English, Geography, etc. Replica material is used where appropriate

Policy Statement

Handling and other education material is appropriate within most areas of the Museum's collections. Considerations of storage capacity aside, the constraints of acquisition and disposal policy need not fully apply when collecting specifically for this purpose. But objects in handling collections run the risk of damage or loss; this will always be borne in mind when selecting them from the existing collections, and the choice should be made

by more than one member of curatorial staff. Donors must be informed before their gifts are used for educational/handling purposes, and whenever possible consulted at the time of donation if this seems the best use for material.

Adopted by St Albans District Council

Richard Shwe

Head of Community Services

9 June 2014

DOCUMENTATION POLICY

St Albans Museums



ST ALBANS
MUSEUMS

This documentation policy aims to ensure that St Albans Museums fulfils its responsibilities in relation to security, management of and access to its collections. It should be read in conjunction with the museum's Documentation Plan which sets out the way in which the policy will be put into action and also the Forward Plan, the Care and Conservation Policy and Plan, Environmental Sustainability Policy, Access Policy, Emergency Plan any other documents affecting the collection. This policy should be reviewed in May 2019.

INTRODUCTION

Documentation underpins every aspect of museum activity. The availability of collections information is central to being accountable for the collections, their accessibility, management, research, study and use.

Our policy for the documentation of the collections is to ensure that the information we hold relating to the collections is accurate, secure, reliable and accessible.

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

The aim of this Policy is to ensure that we fulfil our guardianship, stewardship and access responsibilities for our collection. We will do this by:

- Working towards maintaining full Accreditation Status.
- Working within recognised best practice guidelines for museums.
- Organising systems of work that can be followed and used by future staff and volunteers.
- Developing the museum collections and their use.
- Improving current documentation procedures within the museum so aiding staff development and collections management practice, within the guidelines laid out in the Museum Documentation Procedural Manual, the Collections Development Policy and the Museums Service Plan
- Informing the future review of the Collections Development Policy.

Through implementation of this policy our objectives are to:

- Record sufficient information about objects in our care so each can be identified and located
- have a clear understanding of what is in the museum's collections, where there are gaps for collecting purposes and what collections are inappropriately held.
- maintain at least minimum professional standards in documentation procedures and collection information (as set out in our Documentation Procedural Manual) to aid future staff and volunteers in maintaining the collections for future generations
- Work through our backlog in documentation according to our Documentation Plan and keep up to date with new acquisitions in both paper and electronic format
- extend access to collection information while exercising control of access to sensitive information

- strengthen the security of the collection's documentation
- protect documentation against potential obsolescence of electronic systems
- improve accountability for the collections

RECORDING COLLECTIONS INFORMATION

Existing records are a mixture of paper and computer based. Since the last round of accreditation, we have worked on improving the documentation of several areas of the collections in order to improve access and accountability. This programme will continue over time and includes retrospective documentation where necessary. Ideally for the majority of the collections, especially those that have high monetary or scientific value, items will be documented at an individual level. However, for certain collections, such as bulk archaeological excavation material, it is neither feasible nor practical to document the material in this detail, and we will document items at group level. We therefore aim to have a basic 'inventory' record for all identified items and groups within the collection, whilst some items will be documented to a more detailed 'catalogue' level. These are defined in the box below.

We will document our collections to either Inventory or Catalogue level, as described below:

Inventory level

This includes sufficient key information to allow any object(s) in our care to be individually identified and verified. All accessioned items, loans inward and outward, and any other unaccessioned objects as appropriate are documented at this level.

Catalogue level

Departments will identify the collections that merit further, more detailed, documentation, thus raising the standard of information to catalogue level. Such documentation will include the known history of a specimen, and references to any relevant publication etc.

In all cases, when documenting the collections, we will refer to our Documentation Procedural Manual to ensure that at least minimum standards are maintained for future staff and volunteers to enable access to the collection.

CONTROLLED ACCESS TO SENSITIVE INFORMATION

We will review requests for confidential data such as donor information, environmental information, valuations or site details on a case by case basis, and in accordance with the applicable legislation and any legal agreements or conditions of gift.

SECURITY AGAINST LOSS OF IRREPLACEABLE COLLECTIONS INFORMATION

We have in place measures to ensure the physical security and long-term preservation of all documentation records, whether paper or computerised. We will update all manual and computerised records as appropriate. Where collection information is wholly computerised and managed centrally we will make backup copies of all key files, and where considered appropriate, house them securely off-site.

POTENTIAL OBSOLESCENCE OF ELECTRONIC SYSTEMS

We are maintaining paper records and upgrading electronic systems as new technology becomes available. We are aware that electronic systems could totally fail in which case our paper based records would still provide a complete reference system.

ACCOUNTABILITY FOR THE COLLECTIONS

The Museums and Galleries Commission have defined the essence of accountability as follows:

"to enable museums to fulfil their fundamental responsibilities for collections and the information associated with them. The principles are that a museum should know at any time exactly for what it is legally responsible (this includes loans as well as permanent collections), and where each item is located."
(MGC 1993)

Where collections information is missing, we will endeavour to improve our records to ensure better accountability for our collections.

Adopted by St Albans District Council

Richard Shwe

Head of Community Services
9 June 2014

DOCUMENTATION PLAN 2014

St Albans Museums



ST ALBANS
MUSEUMS

INTRODUCTION

This plan replaces the Documentation Plan October 2010. It should be read in conjunction with the Documentation Policy and the Documentation Procedural Manual and with reference to the Forward Plan and the Care and Conservation Policy and Plan. It is due to be reviewed in May 2019.

THE COLLECTION

St Albans Museums consists of two museums, the Museum of St Albans and the Verulamium Museum. The Museum of St Albans was established in 1898 as the Hertfordshire County Museum. Its collections reflect the social history of St Albans, the Natural History of Hertfordshire and also include the Salaman Collection of Trade Tools, which is nationally significant. The Verulamium Museum was established as the site museum of Iron Age and Roman Verulamium during the 1930s, following the archaeological excavations by Mortimer and Tessa Wheeler. It holds most of the excavated material discovered in the City and District of St Albans.

The museum's collections consists of approximately 80,000 objects and specimens which range from fossils and archaeological remains to archives such as maps, prints drawings, photographs and ephemera associated with St Albans and its people. For more detailed information about the collection, please refer to the Collections Development Policy.

CURRENT PROCEDURES

Procedures for Object Entry, Acquisition, Location and Movement Control, Cataloguing, Loans In and Loans and Placements Out, and Object Exit are all in place and conform as closely as possible to SPECTRUM standards. All procedures are set out in detail in the museum's Documentation Procedural Manual.

REVIEW OF PREVIOUS PLAN

Shortcomings in the documentation of our collections were identified in the previous Documentation Plan 2010 (see Appendix for extract from this plan) and several projects of work were identified to address these issues and timescales set. However, in 2011, the museum went through a large-scale restructure which caused a lot of the planned documentation work to be put on hold. The Collections Manager and Curatorial posts (in their current form) were deleted and instead, two new "Curator of Collections" posts were created – combining curatorial and collections management responsibilities. The turnover of staff and the altered level of workload have meant that not all the aims of the previous plan have been met.

Some of the pieces of work which have now been completed are:

- A documentation procedural manual was developed and all staff who worked with collections were familiarised with it.
- The textile collection has been repackaged and in the most part, location data has been added to collections records.

- The photographic collection has been inventoried and numbers (accession numbers and in some cases, temporary numbers) have been assigned to photographs. They have been repackaged and are now stored thematically. However, items are not all recorded with specific locations and there are still many photographs with the general store location.

RETROSPECTIVE DOCUMENTATION

A documentation backlog exists when the setting up of the primary SPECTRUM procedures has not taken place and their maintenance is not up to date for all items in the permanent collection and those on loan.

A summary of the current shortcomings in the documentation of the various parts of the collection are outlined in the table below with reference to the following documentation issues:

- *A documentation backlog*
Items with all the relevant acquisition details but which have not been accessioned. There are objects with entry numbers that date back many years although no decision has ever been made whether to accession them.
- *Objects with no numbers*
There are items in our stores with no accession numbers. These could be items that have not been accessioned or they could be items that have been accessioned and have lost their numbers.
- *Objects and documentation that don't match.*
In addition to the problems above there are some objects with numbers that don't match to any documentation. For example, objects that don't match the description in the accession register or MDA card.
- *Documentation where you cannot find the objects.*
There are items recorded in our collections management system for which there is no location and so cannot be found immediately. There is a need to identify if these items have gone permanently missing, if they have lost their numbers or if their location can be found.
- *Inadequate storage location information.*
In addition to problems with accessioning, catalogue information varies. Some items are not catalogued, some are in manual daybooks or MDA cards, and some are on computer catalogues. Location records are very variable in quality.

Collection	Summary	Documentation issues
Natural Sciences	<p>The Natural Sciences Collection is a closed collection. However, there are MDA cards for most of the existing collection. The identification of items is sometimes suspect and much of the nomenclature is out of date.</p> <p>The collection has been physically re-organised and all of the existing MDA cards have been input into the Vernon system to inventory level. We still need to write an accession register and look at checking identifications, locations and identify those specimens for which a card no longer exists.</p>	<p>Documentation where you cannot find the objects.</p> <p>Inadequate storage location information.</p>
Postcards, maps and ephemera	<p>The documentation of postcards, maps and ephemera is patchy. Items that have not been accessioned need to be considered in terms of the collecting policy and then accessioned to an inventory level. In the majority of cases, location records need updating with more specific locations (currently located to a particular store room only).</p>	<p>A documentation backlog</p> <p>Objects with no numbers</p> <p>Inadequate storage location information.</p>
Salaman Collection	<p>The important elements of the tool collection purchased by the council were listed in a day book by Mr Salaman. There are various copies of these lists available. The Collection was then accessioned in part during the 1980s and where MDA cards existed, this information has been added to Vernon.</p> <p>Description is very basic and often the identification of the tools and the nomenclature could be improved. The collection had been displayed in the Museum of St Albans but was removed in 2010 and put into storage. The intention was to identify, locate and catalogue all parts of the tool collection (see Documentation Plan 2010) but due to staff changes, this didn't happen. Parts of the collection have been documented to inventory level and whilst specific locations are not known for much of the collection, the general location is recorded</p>	<p>A documentation backlog</p> <p>Documentation where you cannot find the objects.</p> <p>Inadequate storage location information.</p>
Textiles	<p>The majority of the textiles collection has been documented and repackaged but there are still some elements which need to be added to Vernon.</p>	<p>A documentation backlog</p> <p>Inadequate storage location information.</p>
Vehicles	<p>The museum service has a number of agricultural and industrial vehicles. There is some record of them in a conservation audit. However, on the whole they are poorly documented. Their current condition needs assessing, as does their value in relation to the museum Collecting Policy and Service Plan/ budget priorities. Once audited and examined it many may find better homes elsewhere. We are aware of their location (in the museum barn) but this is currently inaccessible to staff.</p>	<p>Objects with no numbers</p>

Social History (General)	The remaining social history collections have been very sporadically documented and the location history is very poor. An audit was attempted in the 1990s but only to a very basic inventory level and other priorities meant that the curators did not have much time to devote to it. Some accessioned objects will simply be listed in notebooks, others will be on MDA cards, others will have MDA cards and a computer record. In 2012, a thorough collection audit was started. We are still in the first stage of creating a basic inventory of all social history items stored in the Depot store but once completed, the next stage will be to view the objects in terms of our collecting policy in order to impose a degree of rationalisation.	<p>A documentation backlog</p> <p>Objects with no numbers</p> <p>Objects and documentation that don't match.</p> <p>Documentation where you cannot find the objects.</p> <p>Inadequate storage location information.</p>
Archaeology	The archaeology <i>small finds</i> are very well documented. Small finds from fieldwork steadily come in and are accessioned following identification. The bulk archaeology (bones, pottery, building material) is not accessioned but is listed and located.	Reconciling accession numbers, duplicates, and missing numbers with physical objects.

DOCUMENTATION ACTION PLAN

Actions are divided between three time scales, short (until end of 2015), medium (until end of 2019) and long terms (until end of 2024). A start date for each term is not specified as some actions may be started and possibly completed ahead of the end of term target date.

Collection	Task	Training	Suggested Personnel	Resources needed	Timescale
Archaeology Roman and Post Roman	Continue to register new acquisitions and to improve existing documentation with photographs and bibliographic entries	Continue appropriate training to include Vernon, handling, labelling and marking	Curatorial Staff, Volunteers	Conservation equipment Computer terminal at depot store	On going
Social History (General)	Continue to register new acquisitions	Vernon, handling, labelling and marking, with reference to Documentation Procedural Manual	Curatorial Staff, Volunteers	Labelling equipment and storage materials Access to Vernon	On going
Social History : (General)	Inventory of objects on display in galleries	Vernon, use of camera, handling objects	Curatorial staff Operations Team (under their AD work) Volunteers	Access to Vernon	Short term December 2014
Oral History	Thorough audit of collection. Digital re-mastering of all the existing tapes and the creation of appropriate records	Training on sound editing	Curatorial staff Operations Team (under their AD work) Volunteers	Tape player/ method of digitising	Short term December 2015
Social History : (General)	Inventory of objects stored in depot store and archive room	Vernon and use of documentation systems , use of camera, handling objects	Curatorial staff Operations Team (under their AD work) Volunteers	A camera set up at the depot Vernon link at depot store office Improve IT link to SGBC	Medium term January 2016

Archives (Postcards, maps, and ephemera)	Re-package and accession to inventory level, weed out and dispose of duplicate and irrelevant material, scan or photograph.	Vernon, handling photographs, documentation procedures	Curatorial staff Operations Team (under their AD work) Volunteers	Packaging materials New scanning equipment as and when needed	Medium term December 2016
Loans	Reconciling documentation for all loans in and out of museum	Documentation procedures	Curatorial staff Volunteers	Access to documentation paperwork Accession registers	Medium Term December 2016
Social History : (General)	Reconcile inventory with existing documentation and update accession registers	Vernon	Curatorial staff Operations Team (under their AD work) Volunteers	MDA cards Accession registers	Medium term December 2018
Social History: Textiles	Catalogue remaining textile collection not yet on Vernon. Take better quality images of textiles properly mounted	Use of camera Vernon	Curatorial staff Operations Team (under their AD work) Volunteers	Camera Materials for mounting costume and textiles (mannequins, jersey, wadding etc)	Medium term July 2016
Roman and post Roman Archaeology Paper archives	Audit, accession and scan large scale O/S maps, plans and artwork. Scan and photograph selected images	General scanning and photography training Vernon training	Keeper of Archaeology. volunteer, District Archaeologist	We will need access to A1, probably A0 size scanners	Medium Term January 2017
Social History (Salaman)	Audit locations and photograph collections	Training on tool identification for curators	Curatorial staff Operations Team (under their AD work) Volunteers	Vernon terminal at depot store	Medium Term December 2018
Photographic Review Archive	Catalogue by inputting image details for each envelope. Scan selected images	Vernon training	Curatorial staff Operations Team (under their AD work)	More packaging materials	Medium Term July 2019

			Volunteers		
Social History: Vehicles	Audit contents of barn and consider them in terms of our disposal policy		Curatorial staff	Access to barn- make safe	Long term January 2022
Natural History	Improved accession records on computer database, re-organise and audit new locations. Evaluate in terms of disposal policy	Refresh knowledge through training on current natural history curation practices	Curatorial staff Operations Team (under their AD work) Volunteers Paid specialist?	Grant to pay for specialist knowledge Vernon terminal at depot store	Long term December 2022
ALL	To photograph all the important objects on display and in store and link images with catalogue record	Use of camera and how to link images into Vernon records for all	Appropriate subject curator, Collections Manager, university of Herts photography students		Long term December 2024
ALL	Produce accurate location listings of objects for the entire museum service. Dependent upon inventory level accessioning (as detailed in previous sections)	Training on use of movement tickets and Vernon	Curatorial staff Operations Team (under their AD work) Volunteers	Vernon terminal at depot store	Long Term December 2024

This is a working document and will be annotated and updated regularly, with a review in May 2019.

The Documentation Plan, the Documentation Action Plan and the Documentation Procedures Manual, provide a complete set of documents for the guidance of all staff and volunteers involved in the documentation of the collections.

APPENDIX

Extract from Documentation Plan 2010

Current Shortcomings and General Review of the Situation

Looking at our current position, it is apparent that in some areas, historically, the documentation practice of the museum has not met minimum standards as defined within Spectrum.

To this end, the documentation is best examined by consideration of the different subject areas. A general shortcoming across all subject areas is the failure to keep the location records updated. The documentation manual lists the broad locations for each of the items and the physical arrangements enables curators to locate and return objects easily. However the information is not always complete on the collections database and certainly needs regular review.

The following review should be read in conjunction with Appendix 1 which provides a summary of these points with particular attention to documentation limitations and the resources which may be required.

5.1 Natural Sciences

The Natural Sciences Collection is a closed collection. However, there are MDA cards for most of the existing collection. The identification of items is sometimes suspect and much of the nomenclature is out of date.

The collection has been physically re-organised and all of the existing MDA cards have been input into the Vernon system to inventory level. We still need to write an accession register and look at checking identifications, locations and identify those specimens for which a card no longer exists.

5.2 Social History

The Social History in general is very poorly documented.

5.2.1 Oil Paintings, works on paper, photographs, postcards, maps and ephemera

Certain areas of these museum archives have been documented to inventory level in the past by staff and volunteers, however much of this was done using temporary numbers rather than accession numbers. For the rest the levels of documentation are patchy.

A complete audit of the collection is needed. Items that have not been accessioned need to be considered in terms of the collecting policy and then accessioned to an inventory level. Items that have been accessioned will need their location records updating.

5.2.2 The Salaman Collection

The important elements of the collection purchased by the council were listed in a day book by Mr Salaman. There are various copies of these lists available. The Collection was then accessioned in part during the 1980s but very little of it has been transferred onto MDA cards and even less onto the Vernon system. Description is very basic and often the identification of the tools and the nomenclature can be improved.

The collection has now been removed from the gallery and a project is underway to identify locate and catalogue the collection

There is a computerised list of Mr Salaman's paper archives.

5.2.3 The Textiles

The identifications and current use of nomenclature makes searching the collection very difficult.

Locations need to be input into the system and a thorough audit and review needs to be undertaken.

5.2.4 The Vehicles

The museum service has a number of agricultural and industrial vehicles. There is some record of them in a conservation audit. However, on the whole they are poorly documented. Their current condition needs assessing, as does their value in relation to the museum Collecting Policy and Service Plan/ budget priorities. Once audited and examined it many may find better homes elsewhere. We are aware of their locations.

5.2.5 The Social History (General)

The remaining Social History Collections have been very sporadically documented and the location history is very poor. An audit was attempted in the 1990s but only to a very basic inventory level and other priorities meant that the curators did not have much time to devote to it. A thorough collection audit needs to be undertaken and the objects need to be viewed in terms of our collecting policy in order to impose a degree of rationalisation.

Some accessioned objects will simply be listed in notebooks, others will be on MDA cards, others will have MDA cards and a computer record. The aim is for all objects to have an MDA card, a Vernon computer record, an accession register record and also, if possible, a photograph.

Locations need to be reviewed and updated.

5.3 The Archaeology

The archaeology *small finds* are very well documented. The only non-accessioned archaeological objects are the *small finds* from fieldwork steadily coming in and this is accessioned following identification. The bulk archaeology (bones, pottery, building material) is not accessioned but is listed.

Locations need to be reviewed and updated.

Appendix 3 – Park Buildings Maintenance Programme

All park buildings are visited on a daily and weekly basis by the Grounds Maintenance Contractor, any problems and faults that they identify are reported to the Property Service team who arrange for repairs to be carried out.

A full electrical inspection is carried out every five years. This is done to ensure that all electrical installations comply with the current regulations.

Emergency lighting is serviced twice a year and fire extinguishers are serviced one a year.

This routine covers the following Facilities:

- Causeway Toilets
- Running Track Toilet Facility
- Cricket Pavilion
- St Michaels' Pavilion and toilet Facility

Action	By Who	When											
		J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Legionella Assessment	Property Services	Next due 2014											
Monthly Legionella Checks	Sub Contractor	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Quarterly Checks	Sub Contractor	-	-	1	-	-	1	-	-	1	-	-	1
Tank Cleaning, (twice yearly)	Sub Contractor	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Water Sampling	Sub Contractor	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
Electrical Inspection	Sub Contractor	Next due 2016											
Emergency ILighting	Sub Contractor	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	1
Fire Extinguishers	Sub Contractor	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Gas Safety Report and Boiler Servicing	Sub Contractor	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Decorations	Sub Contractor		Next due 2016										

The Lake

The Contractor will maintain the lakes together with all equipment in an attractive and healthy condition.

Lakes are to be kept free of litter, rubbish, dead animals and dead and/or invasive plants. This includes large build ups of weed and duckweed. In addition scum and debris around the edge of the Lake will be netted off weekly by the Contractor. The Contractor shall carry also treatment water with a product called Symbio this produced helps to control the growth of alga.

Action	By Who	When											
		J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Remove Litter	John O'Conner	Once per week throughout the Year											
Apply water Treatment	John O'Conner	-	-	Once per week during growing season						-	-		

Roads and Paths

Each year the condition of all paths and roads is assessed and the funds are allocated to areas that need maintenance. The assessment is carried out by the Green Spaces Officer and an engineer.

The recently installed cycle path surface is projected to last 10 years before any resurfacing is needed.

Action	By Who	When											
		J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Paths and Road Assessment	Property Services	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Carry out repairs	Sub Contractor	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	1	1	1	-	-

Toddlers Splash Park

The Toddler's Splash Park is a technically complex facility and requires very specialised maintenance and regular checks to ensure that the water quality meets the required standards for public use.

The facility is owned by the Council and managed by Leisure Connection in accordance with the “Managing Health and Safety in Swimming Pools” guide lines issued by the Health and Safety Executive.

The key items are listed blow:

[illegible]

[illegible]

Appendix 4 –Feasibility Study, Options Appraisal and Outline Designs for the River Ver through St Albans (Environment Agency)

REVITALISING THE RIVER ST ALBANS



Our Outline Proposals

**Reach 1 - Upper section of Verulamium Park
including the lakes**

19 March 2018



Reach 1 overview

Reach 1 covers the River Ver from St Michael's Street through the upper section of Verulamium Park down to the Causeway and also includes the ornamental lakes – see maps below.

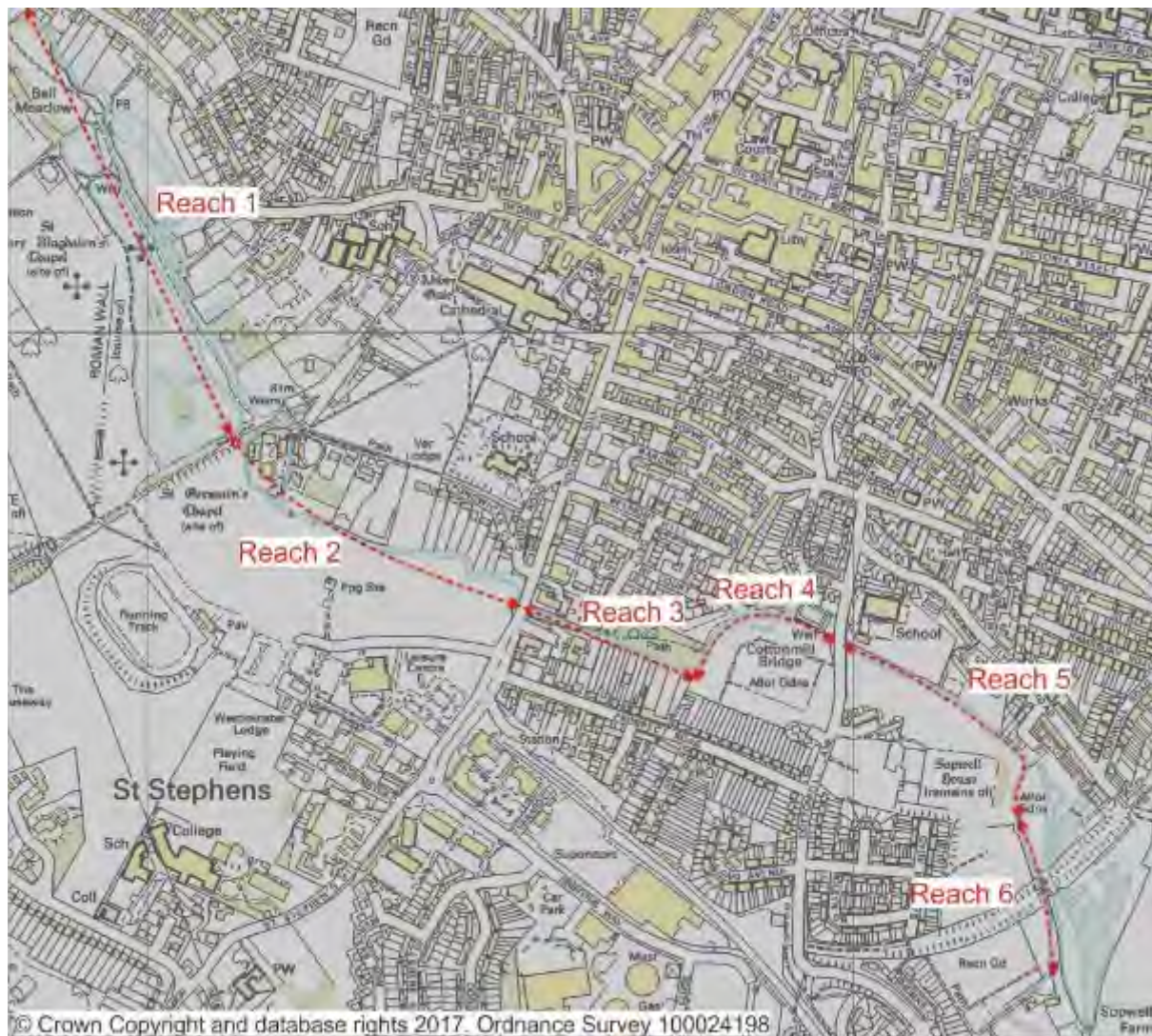


Figure 1 - Map of all reaches



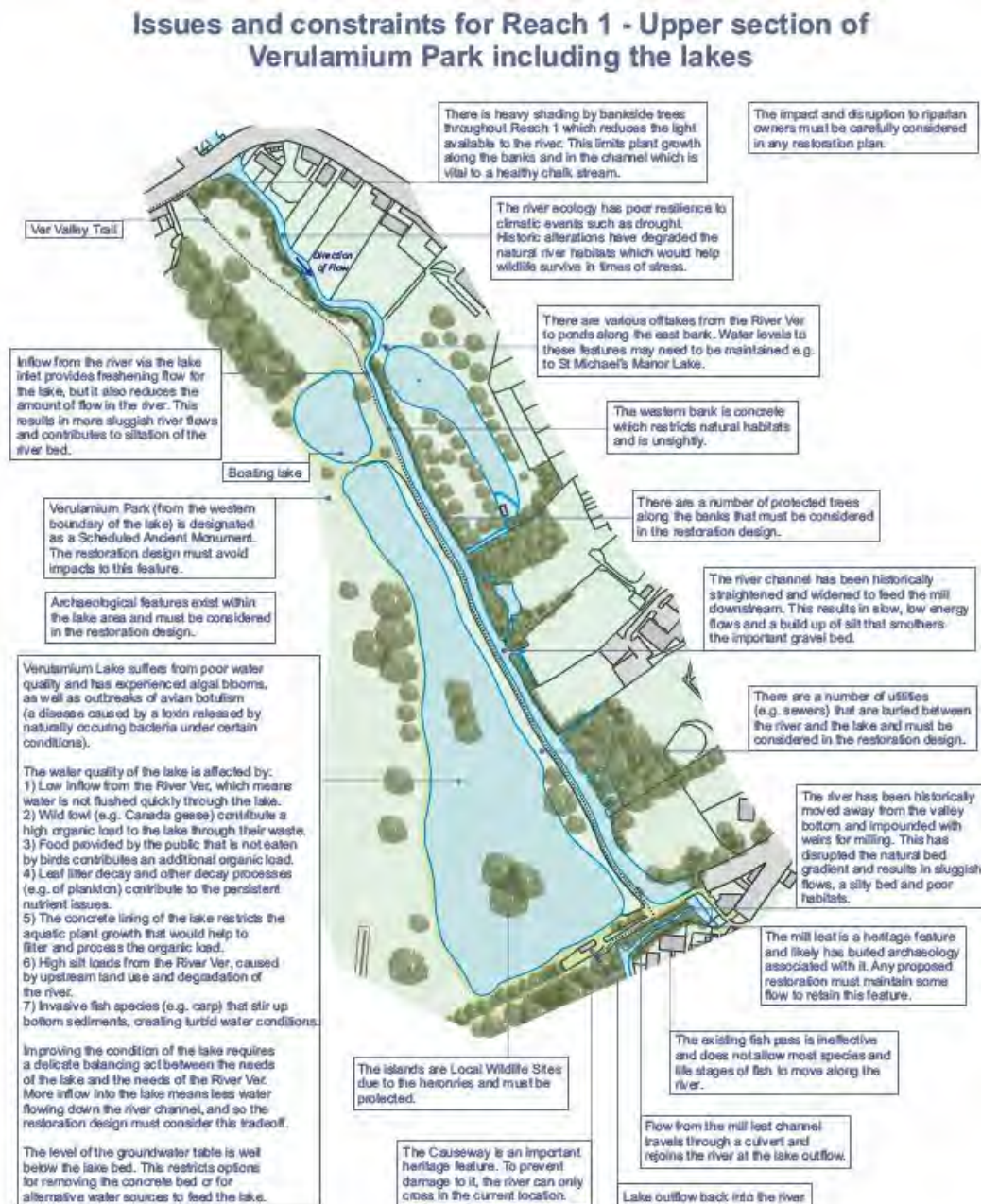
Figure 2- basemap of reach 1

Verulamium Park is hugely popular with residents and visitors. However, the artificial lakes that are a central feature of the park have suffered badly from high profile water quality issues in recent years. The River Ver, which flows through the park, has played an important role in the history of St Albans, but has been significantly changed from the natural chalk stream it once was. As a result, the river no longer has many of the iconic chalk stream features and the varied and abundant wildlife it should support.

Our proposed plans offer a solution to the issues in reach 1 and include a range of features to improve the river, lake and park for both people and wildlife.

Issues and constraints overview

This plan shows the range of issues which currently affect the river and lakes and the constraints within which we are working to develop solutions. Click on the plan to open it in a separate pdf which will allow you to zoom in and see the detail. Further information on the issues is provided in the following sections of the report.



© Crown copyright and database rights (2017) Ordnance Survey 0100031613

DRAFT



Figure 3- issues and constraints



Issues with the River Ver

The River Ver through Reach 1 is in a particularly bad condition. It has lost all of its chalk stream characteristics through historic alterations. The issues which affect the river in reach 1 are:

- Perched channel – the river was moved northward out of the valley bottom to a higher elevation to form the mill leat and provide the head drop required to power the mill.
- Weirs – the mill weir still exists, severely reducing the natural bed gradient and impounding flow throughout this reach, as well as preventing fish passage.
- Over-wide and straight – again, as a result of the milling industry, the river was widened and straightened slowing flows and removing natural channel variation.
- Low flows – due to abstraction pressure and many different flow splits (for example to the main lakes, other online lakes to the north, to feed the ineffective fish pass, and to flow over the mill weir) the flow in the river is often very low.
- Silty – as a result of the above factors, in particular slow flows, the natural gravel river bed is smothered in silt.
- Heavy shading – the overhanging trees block light to the river and the resulting heavy shade blocks light to the river and restricts plant growth.
- Disconnected from the floodplain – the natural valley bottom is to the south of the river where the lakes are.
- Concrete banks – the south bank of the river is concrete which prevents marginal plant growth.

All of these issues are explained in more detail [here](#)

Issues with the Lakes

The lakes in Verulamium Park were constructed between 1929 and 1932 partly to give much needed work to unemployed people during the depression. The lakes were lined with hand poured concrete and are no more than around one metre deep.



Figure 4 – shows the concrete base of the lake under construction

The lakes are a completely artificial feature and as a result they suffer from a variety of issues and require substantial maintenance. However, they are a much loved feature of the park with huge potential to be improved both for people and wildlife.

The problems with the lake arise from a number of factors which we explain in the table below.

Issue	Description	Why is this a problem?
Low through-flow of water	The lakes are fed by the River Ver via a sluice gate into the northern boating lake. The volume of the lakes is very large in comparison to the amount of flow they receive from the River Ver. The river itself suffers from low flows and often doesn't have water to spare for the lakes. When the river level is too low, no water enters the lake.	Low inflow from the River Ver means it takes a long time for water to be flushed through the lake. This exacerbates water quality issues as there is often little freshening of the lake water.
Large and shallow	The lakes are large, but very shallow with an even depth. This means that they have a high surface area to volume ratio making them more susceptible to progressive warming throughout the summer and dramatic water temperature changes.	This can create conditions which contribute to algal blooms and oxygen crashes (as planktonic biomass is decomposed). These are bad for wildlife and water quality.
Excessive nutrients - eutrophication	The lake water is nutrient enriched. Causes include wildfowl waste, uneaten rotting food fed to the birds, leaf litter input, decaying algal matter (especially following algal blooms), waste and stirring up of sediments by bottom feeding fish, and the release of nutrients stored in sediments under certain conditions.	Nutrient enriched conditions cause poor water quality which can lead to algal blooms and low oxygen levels. These are bad for wildlife and algal blooms can also be unsightly.
Algal blooms	An algal bloom is a rapid growth of algae in the water which often results in a surface scum or murky water conditions. The size and shallow nature of the lake causes the water temperature to rise dramatically in hot weather. Combined with the nutrient-rich water, lack of flow throughput this creates conditions for blooms to occur, especially in the summer when weather conditions are calm and water levels often at their lowest.	The decay of algal matter uses up the oxygen in the water, which can impact wildlife. The decaying matter also exacerbates the eutrophication issue and contributes to the sediment in the lakes when the algal bloom dies back.

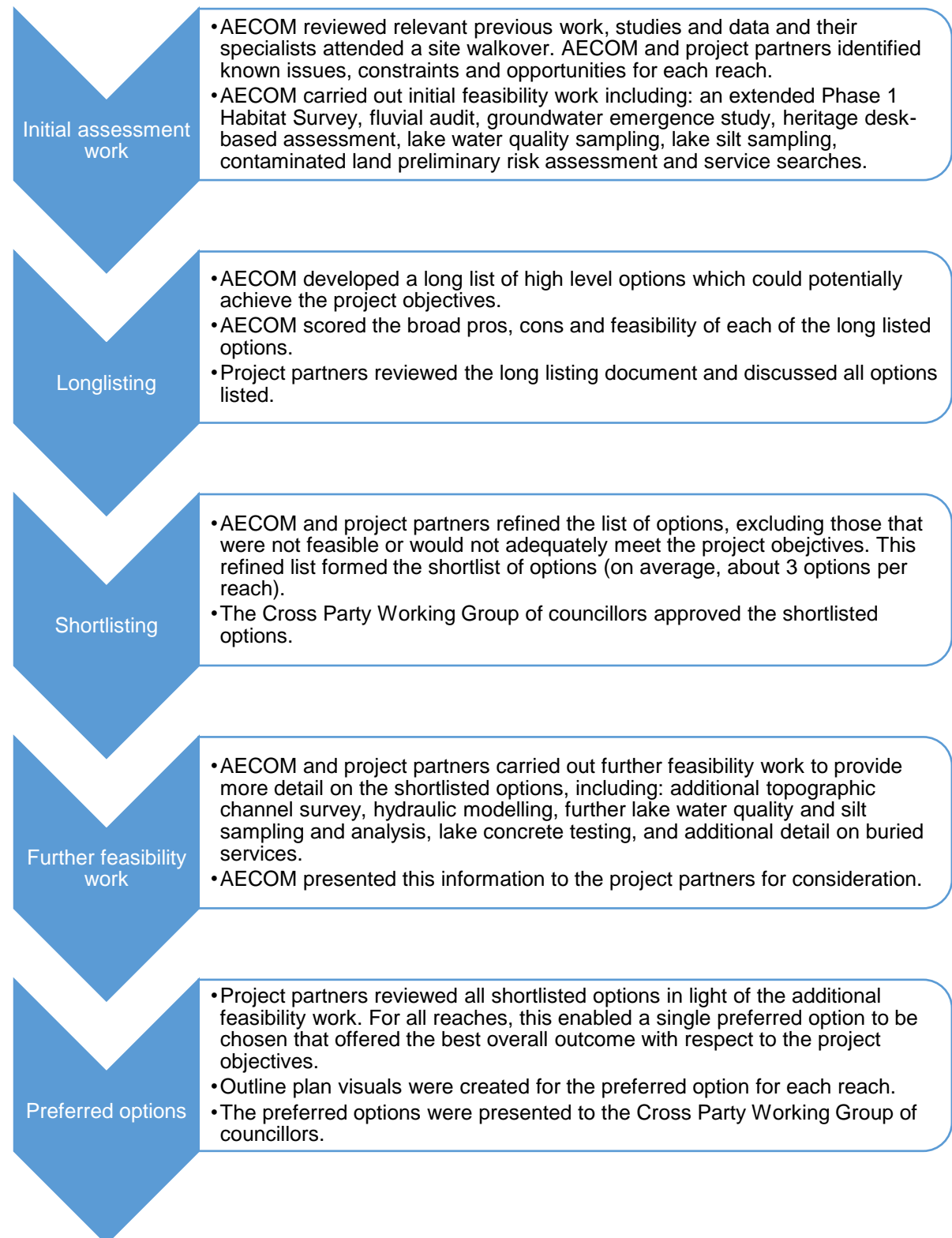
Wild fowl	People like to feed the birds on the lakes, but this encourages an excessively high population of wild fowl – particularly Canada geese. These wildfowl contribute a high organic load to the lake through their waste, but the uneaten food also rots in the water adding to the high nutrient load in the lakes.	As organic matter is decomposed it uses up the oxygen in the lake which can impact other aquatic life.
Avian botulism	Avian botulism outbreaks are caused by toxins released during the growth of the <i>C. botulinum</i> bacterium. This bacteria is naturally occurring, but may multiply under certain conditions. This includes warm temperatures, an anaerobic (no oxygen) environment (such as in lake sediments), and in the presence of a protein source.	This is a serious bacterial disease that kills birds. There have been several suspected cases in recent years in the lakes.
Lack of plants in the lake and around the lake margins	<p>The lack of plants is due to a number of factors:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plants can't root into the concrete bed • Sheer concrete banks don't allow natural marginal plants to grow • Any young plants that do manage to grow are eaten by grazing wildfowl and fish so it's difficult for them to establish • High suspended sediment and low oxygen conditions restrict aquatic plant growth • Enriched nutrient conditions encourage a phytoplankton dominated ecosystem 	<p>Aquatic and marginal plants help to manage nutrients in lake water and sediment.</p> <p>Plants also help regulate water temperature, water clarity, and submerged plants are important for generating oxygen during the day by photosynthesis.</p> <p>A lack of plants also means that there is very little habitat to support diverse lake wildlife.</p>
Concrete lining and banks	The concrete lining and banks of the lakes restrict the establishment of plants that would help to balance the levels of nutrients in the water.	Plants cannot establish and the benefits of having a plant rich lake are not available.

Silt / sediment	<p>More organic material enters the lakes than can be processed naturally. This builds up as silt on the lake bed. It is nutrient rich and adds to the issue of eutrophication (excessive nutrients)</p> <p>The organic matter that forms silt comes predominantly from wildfowl and fish waste, rotting uneaten food, leaf litter and decaying algal matter. Some sediment also comes from the Ver inflow.</p>	<p>When the water level is low sediment protrudes above the surface. This represents a hazard to wildlife, people and dogs that walk onto it. The silt itself is not hazardous, but it is unsightly and can be very smelly in warm weather.</p> <p>The build-up of silt creates even shallower conditions in an already shallow lake environment. This reduces water quality and makes the lakes warm up faster in hot weather.</p>
Bottom-feeding fish	<p>The fish in the lake are predominantly non-native species such as carp. These are bottom-feeding fish which stir up sediments at the bottom of the lake creating cloudy water conditions as they cause the silt to be re-suspended in the lake water.</p>	<p>Turbid, or cloudy, water restricts light penetration which means that aquatic plants struggle to grow.</p> <p>Re-suspension of silt and its associated nutrients contributes to the eutrophication issues mentioned earlier.</p>

Option selection process

How we got to our outline proposals

For each of the six reaches, AECOM and the project partners worked through the process show below to identify the best overall option to meet the three project objectives.



Long and shortlisting

For this reach there was an initial 'long list' of 14 different options to improve the river. In addition a long list of 16 lake improvement options were considered. These long lists of options were carefully considered and a short list of four river options and seven lake options were taken forward.

River Ver shortlisted options

Four river options were shortlisted for more detailed consideration:

Option number	Description
5	Small re-alignment of the River Ver at the downstream end of the reach, through an infilled section of the lower end of the large lake. Upstream bed regrading and in-channel enhancements.
7	Full re-alignment of the channel through the west of the lakes with a new connection to reach 2 further west through the Causeway.
8	Full re-alignment of the channel in between the lakes and the current channel.
14	Maintain current channels, re-design fish pass and lower weir

The decision we reached was to take forward aspects of options 7 and 8 to form a proposed 'hybrid' option. The hybrid option offers the greatest environmental outcome for the river, and resolves some of the potential issues presented by each of the separate options.

The proposed hybrid option keeps the upper part of the river on its existing course, but with in-channel feature improvement works. It then moves the lower part of the river through the south eastern corner of the larger lake and Causeway, bypassing the ineffective fish pass and weirs. It also enables flow to be maintained in the mill leat channel by the Abbey Mill, as well as inflow to the lake. This option would be undertaken together with the proposed lake improvement options detailed below.

Verulamium lakes shortlisted options

Out of the 16 lake improvement options, the decision we reached was to take forward the following combination of measures:

- Dredging of all sediments within the lake and reusing the material (likely after drying) in the creation of marginal planting areas, island enlargement and partial infilling
- Partial infilling/narrowing to create space for the new river channel and to create marginal planting areas and larger islands

- Wetland creation/planting on the banks of the lake, as well as plants that root on the bed, and floating plants.
- Removing carp from the lakes and introducing a more controlled mix of species to include predator species such as rudd and perch
- Slightly increasing flows from the River Ver into the lake, whilst ensuring the Ver is not adversely affected
- Island enlargement

The lakes will remain an artificial feature. As such they will always require a certain degree of maintenance and will likely still suffer from occasional issues particularly in drought conditions. However, we are confident that this combination of measures will significantly improve the habitat and water quality of the lakes in the longer term and substantially reduce the frequency and severity of issues such as algal blooms. They also offer lots of added value in terms of amenity, recreation, and wildlife.



Figure 5 Lake at low levels showing sediment

Outline proposals

This is the outline proposed plan for reach 1. Click on the plan to open it in a separate pdf which will allow you to zoom in and see the detail.

The combination of measures we are proposing will significantly help to address the issues with the lakes, transform the river and improve the park for St Albans residents and visitors.

The concrete lined, slow, silty river will be transformed to a beautiful, meandering chalk stream, able to support a wide variety of wildlife; A new river channel will be created alongside the lake; Wetland habitats teeming with wildlife will be accessible by boardwalks; Marginal plants will improve the look of the lakes and improve the water quality.

We believe our plans will create a park that St Albans can be proud of.



© Crown copyright and database rights (2017) Ordnance Survey 0100031613

DRAFT

Next steps

We would like to hear what you think of the proposed plans, both for this reach and any others you are interested in. There is a survey on St Albans City and District Council's website [here](#) where you can leave us your feedback.

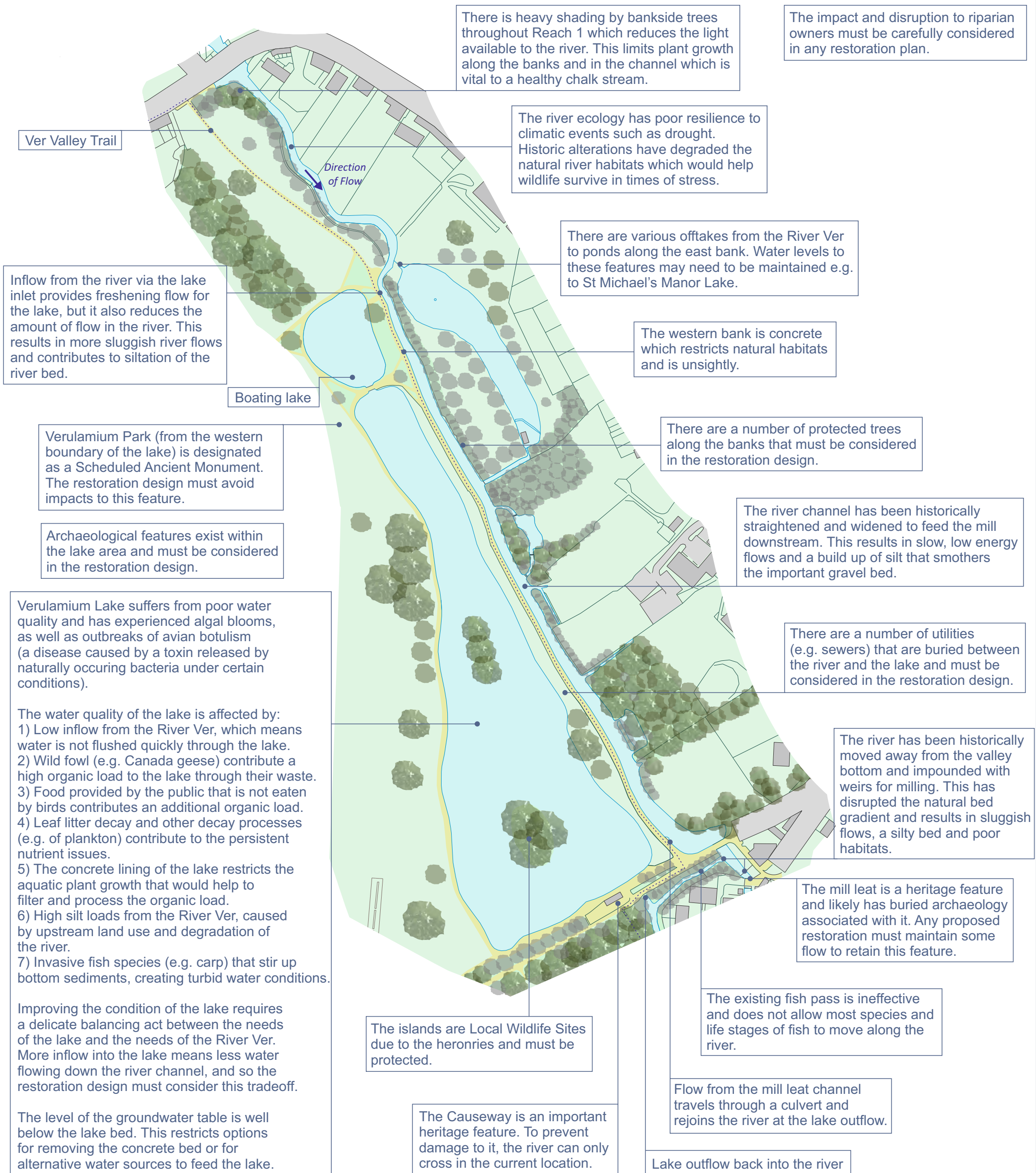
We are organising engagement events for stakeholders which will be held over the coming months. Feedback from the survey and these events will be used to refine the outline plans.

Once we have agreed the proposed option, we will carry out further feasibility studies that are necessary to help inform the detailed designs. The detailed designs will then be developed and any necessary permissions will be sought. Alongside this, we will also begin to identify potential sources of funding to deliver the plans.

There will be many other opportunities throughout this process for you to have your say. We hope you share our enthusiasm for this fantastic opportunity to achieve significant benefits and that you will help us shape the proposals to achieve the best possible outcomes for people and wildlife in St Albans.



Issues and constraints for Reach 1 - Upper section of Verulamium Park including the lakes



The outline proposals for Reach 1 - Upper section of Verulamium Park including the lakes

