



Hertford Cemetery

GREENSPACE ACTION PLAN, 2022 - 2027

BRIEFING DOCUMENT

Produced by:



On behalf of:



HERTFORD TOWN COUNCIL

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1. INTRODUCTION

A five-year Greenspace Action Plan (GAP) is being produced for Hertford Cemetery. This briefing document provides an overview of how the GAP will be produced and sets out how stakeholders can contribute to shaping the plan.

GAPs are essentially map-based management plans that provide focus and direction for the running and improvement of open spaces. They provide a clear, logical process to determine the activities that should take place over a stated period to achieve the objectives for the site.

The GAP is being produced by the Countryside Management Service (CMS), part of Hertfordshire County Council's Countryside and Rights of Way Service, on behalf of and in partnership with Hertford Town Council. The completed document will inform the management actions to be undertaken over the next five years, commencing in April 2022.

Engaging communities is integral to the production of GAPs, to ensure that stakeholders are fully aware of and able to interact with the plan production process. This briefing document initiates and supports this community engagement.

The engagement period will run from 23rd August to 13th September. A further engagement period in October 2021 will provide an opportunity to assess the draft version of the GAP. Please use the contact details in Section 6 to comment on the aspirations for the site.

This document has been broken down into easy to read sections:

Section 2 provides an overview of the site and location map.

Section 3 reviews recent management of the site.

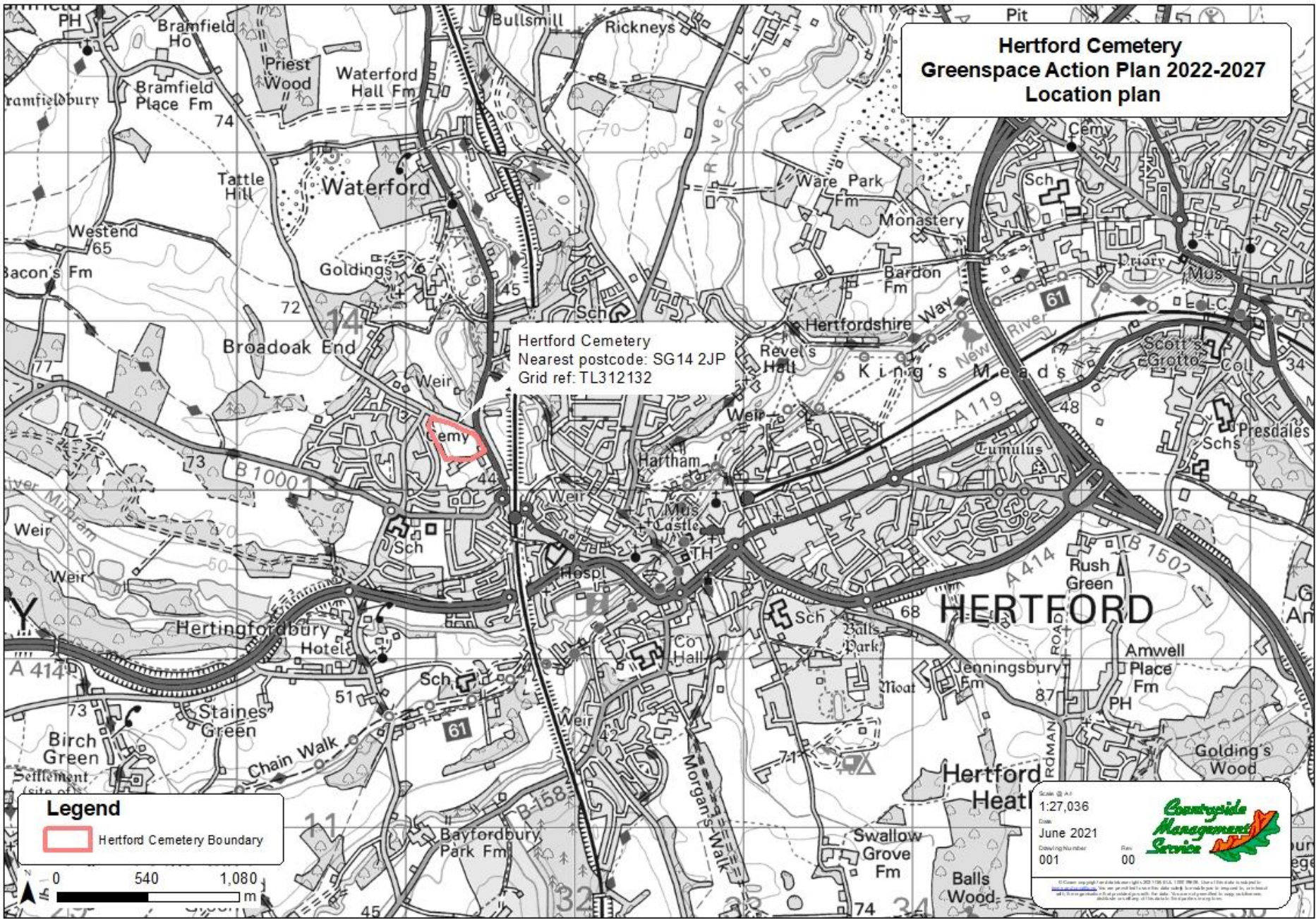
Section 4 contains the core objectives for the Hertford Cemetery GAP.

Section 5 summarises the public engagement methodology, setting out how and when stakeholders can contribute to the plan.

2. BACKGROUND

Hertford Cemetery is owned and managed by Hertford Town Council. It is located to the north of Hertford, west of North Road and southwest of Bramfield Road. The cemetery includes burial land from St Andrews Parish Church which was joined to the newly designated burial land in 1945. The cemetery covers approximately 5 hectares and supports a wide range of wildlife and provides a peaceful environment. The west, northwest and some of the south sides of the cemetery are designated as a Local Wildlife Site because of the presence of semi-improved neutral grassland with a mix of grasses and herbs. There are several sites which are designated as Local Wildlife Sites near to this site including Goldings Meadow, Beane Marsh and Long Wood.

The overall appearance of the cemetery is one of beautifully kept lawns and wildflower meadows in amongst mature trees. The site is being managed in a sympathetic way for wildlife and there are three broad management regimes. The majority of the cemetery is maintained through regular mowing, some open areas with fewer headstones are rich in wildflowers and cut and collected annually and an area designated for future burials is dominated by grasses and cut and collected annually. The current management for wildlife is based on previous advice from the Countryside Management Service. There is a desire to formalise the management of areas defined as conservation cut and lift or close-cut grass, to improve the aesthetic value of the site and to update interpretation. This Greenspace Action Plan will provide a structured and targeted approach to future management for the period 2022-2027.



3. REVIEW OF PROGRESS

The site is managed by a grounds maintenance team based on site. Current management of the site is based on previous advice by the Countryside Management Service and previous surveying based on the Local Wildlife Site designation. Current management operations include:

- Regular cutting of grass around headstones and along the edges of pathways.
- Annual cutting of conservation cut and lift (wildflower meadows) areas.
- The planting of new and replacement trees, shrubs, hedges, herbaceous perennials and bulbs at the times required.
- Routine winter maintenance tasks such as leaf clearing, pruning and memorial stability.
- The reinstatement as necessary of grassed areas in special circumstances, e.g. following excavation by undertakers.
- Site security, the opening and closing and presence on site daily (excluding weekends) throughout the year to carry out supervisory and customer liaison duties and normal horticultural tasks such as watering as necessary, sweeping and the removal of rubbish.
- Sweeping and keeping clean and weed free all paths, paved areas and hard surfacing.
- Removal of all litter leaves and arising from the sites.
- Trees are surveyed and assessed every 3 years with remedial works prioritised undertaken.

4. GREENSPACE ACTION PLAN (GAP) 2022-2027

The Hertford Cemetery GAP 2022-2027 will be a simple, easy to read plan for use by officers of Hertford Town Council and members of the public and will act as a guide to the work of volunteers. The plan will be largely map based, with sequential, annual management maps to show the actions planned for each year. The resulting change will be represented on the map for the following year. The document will be reviewed annually to ensure it remains effective and relevant. The plan will be costed, and potential funding sources identified to enable the plan to be delivered.

The aim and objectives of the GAP are based upon Green Flag assessment criteria and the Town Council endeavours to manage its land to these standards and are set out below.

Aim

To provide a welcoming and tranquil setting, attractive and rich in wildlife, where people can come to be with their loved ones or simply relax in peaceful surroundings.

Objectives

A. A welcoming place

To provide a tranquil and welcoming setting for those visiting Hertford Cemetery.

A1 Appropriate management of the grass, trees, and shrubs on site so that the appearance of the site is one of a maintained and welcoming space.

A2 Maintain a network of paths around the site.

A3 Provide suitable informative signage at the entrances.

B. Healthy, safe and secure

To ensure that visitors feel safe and secure in the cemetery.

B1 Ensure that the cemetery remains a safe environment for all visitors.

B2 Footpaths must be well maintained and safe to use.

B3 Headstones and monuments must be safe and monitored to ensure that they continue to be safe.

B4 Ensure that grounds maintenance staff are trained in the use of all machinery and have suitable PPE.

C. Clean and well maintained

To ensure that the cemetery is clean, tidy and is well maintained.

C1 Ensure that an effective grounds maintenance regime is in place to uphold the maintenance standards of the site.

C2 Ensure that the cemetery infrastructure is kept in good condition.

D. Sustainability

To ensure that the management of the site is as sustainable as possible.

D1 Funding identified where required for capital works.

D2 Management operations in the cemetery are to be carried out sustainably.

D3 Management operations should have limited impact on the surrounding environment.

E. Conservation and Heritage

To ensure that the habitats present on site are maintained to enhance the biodiversity of the site whilst maintaining the overall character for the site.

E1 Review tree management to enhance sight lines and cemetery aesthetics.

E2 Maintain current hedgerows and trees to provide space for wildlife whilst ensuring their safety.

E3 Manage grassland to increase the benefit to biodiversity whilst ensuring that the site retains a feeling of being well maintained.

F. Community Involvement

Enable bereaved families and volunteers to get involved in the development of the site.

F1 Provide opportunities for CMS practical volunteers to be involved with the management of the site.

F2 Provide opportunities for visitors and bereaved families to get involved with the site.

G. Marketing

Raise awareness of the site and what it has to offer.

G1 Install new interpretation to inform visitors about the management, history and wildlife present.

G2 Promote the site via the website.

5. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND PLAN PRODUCTION PROCESS

Effective community engagement is at the centre of successful management plans. The value of a GAP is maximised when it incorporates and balances the aspirations of stakeholders and interest groups.

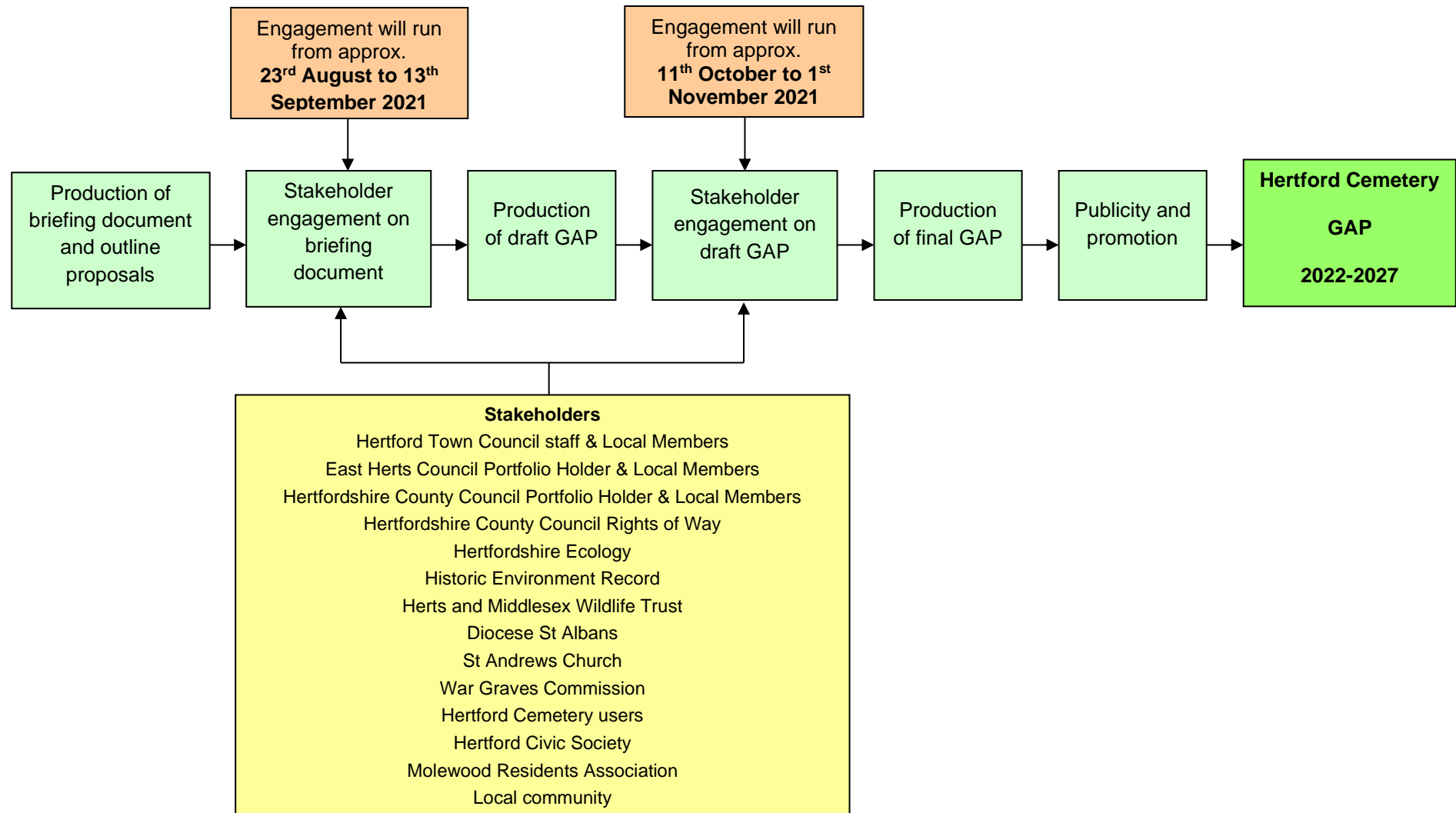
In order to provide all interested stakeholders and groups with the opportunity to feed into the production of the new GAP, we have adopted a structured two-stage approach to community engagement.

- For the first stage (this briefing document), stakeholders and site users will be invited to make comment on the core aspirations in Section 4; it is hoped that any further aspirations and/or issues will be identified through this information gathering process. This first stage of community engagement will run between **Monday 23rd August and Monday 13th September 2021**. Part of this engagement process will involve attending an environment and climate awareness event at All Saints Church on the 11th September to provide information about the proposed Gap and answer questions.
- For the second stage, stakeholders and site users will be invited to read through and make comment on the draft GAP, which will include the detailed proposals and actions. This stage is intended to run in between approximately **Monday 11th October and Monday 1st November 2021**.

Following the second stage exercise, the final document will be produced, published and the actions will commence.

Please be aware that we will not respond individually to comments received through the public engagements; instead, we will produce a summary of comments, noting any amendments made to the plan as a result. This engagement response document will be published online alongside the briefing document, draft plan and final plan. We will retain contact details only for the purpose of keeping respondents informed about the plan development process.

The diagram on the following page shows the Greenspace Action Plan production process:



6. STAKEHOLDER FEEDBACK

Thank you for taking the time to read this document. We are keen to receive feedback from you on our proposals for the Hertford Cemetery Greenspace Action Plan (GAP) 2022 - 2027.

Please return your comments using the contact details below by **Monday 13th September** at the latest.

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