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# Victoria Playing Field

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Greenspace Action  
Plan 2016 - 2021

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## 1. SITE SUMMARY

<b>Site name</b>	Victoria Playing Field
<b>Site address</b>	Folly Lane St Albans Hertfordshire AL3 4DW
<b>Grid Reference</b>	TL 142076
<b>Owner</b>	St Albans City and District Council (SADC)
<b>Designations</b>	Conservation Area (St Albans)

### **Vision Statement**

The Greenspace Action Plan (GAP) for Victoria Playing Field sets out the management, maintenance and development framework of the playing field over five years.

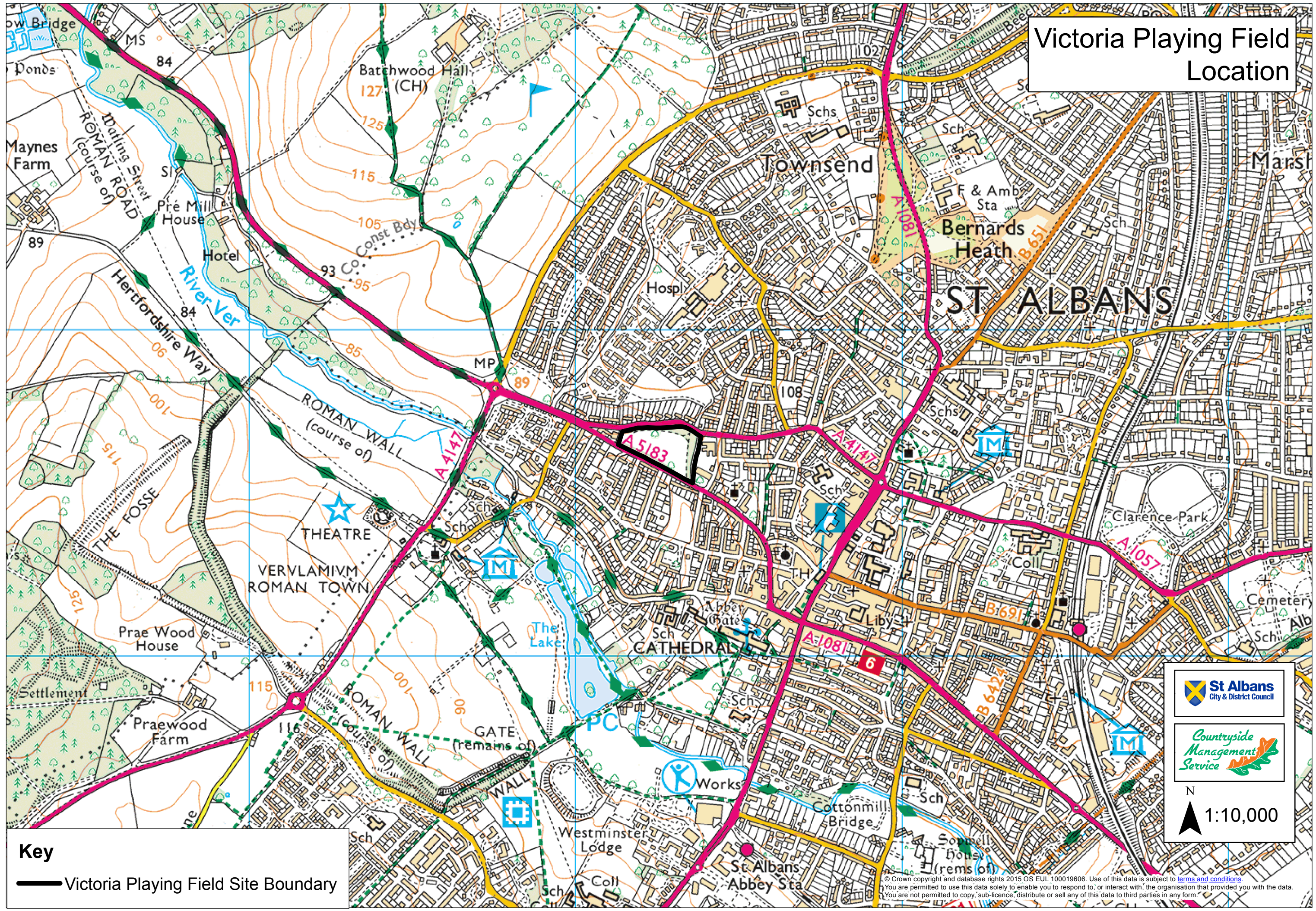
The GAP is reviewed annually, so that any outstanding tasks can be rescheduled as necessary. The GAP is also frequently reviewed in conjunction with the Countryside Management Service (CMS) and any other relevant bodies.

Victoria Playing Field contains a range of habitats from amenity grassland, areas of long grass, parkland trees and boundary hedges.

This plan seeks to secure a sustainable future for the playing field, to conserve the formal parkland landscape and introduce management regimes to conserve and enhance the mosaic of wildlife habitats, whilst promoting the playing field as a key open green space and enhancing its recreational value. The plan also looks to conserve and enhance the historical features of the playing field such as access routes.



# Victoria Playing Field Location



**Key**  
 — Victoria Playing Field Site Boundary



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# Victoria Playing Field Site description



**Key**

- Basketball hoop
- Bench
- Dog bin
- Litter bin
- Lockable noticeboard
- Pedestrian access
- Vehicular access
- Trees
- Conservation cut grass
- Amenity grass
- Hedge
- Football pitch
- Play area
- Steps
- Hard surface

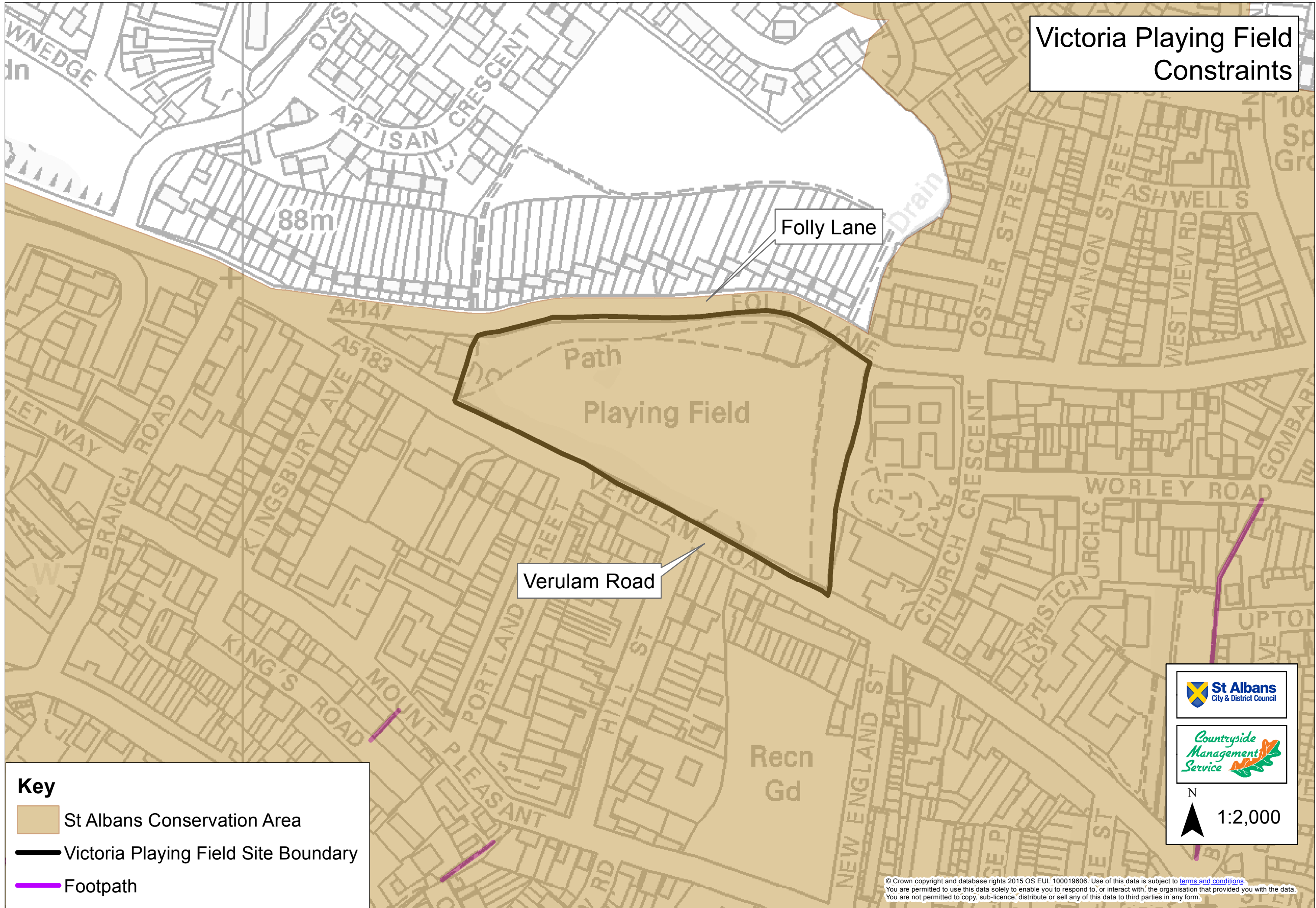
**St Albans**  
City & District Council

*Countryside Management Service*




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1:800

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# Victoria Playing Field Constraints



**Key**

-  St Albans Conservation Area
-  Victoria Playing Field Site Boundary
-  Footpath

  
  
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## **2.4 INTRODUCTION**

Victoria Playing Field is located between Folly Lane (A4147) and Verulam Road (A5183) within the St Peters Ward of St Albans, approximately one mile from St Albans city centre and the City Railway Station. Pedestrian access is via both Folly Lane and Verulam Road with vehicular access provided off Folly Lane. The facilities found on site include numerous benches, a basketball hoop, football goals and a children's play area.

## **2.5 GEOGRAPHY AND LANDSCAPE**

The site sits in an urban context, situated on the edge of the City of St Albans and bordered by two busy roads. The Muriel Green Nursery is located on the eastern boundary with a vehicle repair garage on the western boundary. However the site retains a peaceful atmosphere, sitting slightly lower than the surrounding area, with boundary hedges and mature trees providing a sense of enclosure for visitors.

The playing field is laid out for informal recreation and is a popular local open greenspace, which is used by the local community for a range of activities including sports, dog walking and events. The landscape has an open feel, offering long views across the site. It is dominated by large trees located around the perimeter of the site consisting of a range of species many of which are ornamental. Bulbs planted by the local community provide colour and interest in spring. The southern boundary is marked by a low formally managed hawthorn hedge whilst the northern boundary is dominated by laurel. Estate fencing along both boundaries adds to the formal setting.

There are no wildlife conservation designations associated with this site. It does lie within the St Albans Conservation Area, which protects its special landscape character. This designation gives trees within the site additional legal protection.

In July 2015 SADC approved a request by the Friends of Victoria Playing Field (FVPF) that Victoria Playing Field be included in the Council's register of assets of community value. An asset of community value is land or property of importance to a local community which is subject to additional protection from development under the Localism Act 2011. The registration lasts for five years from 6<sup>th</sup> July 2015.

## **2.6 HISTORY & ARCHAEOLOGY**

The Victoria Playing Field was in use as clay pits during the nineteenth century at least, and may date back to the medieval and possibly Roman periods. There is also evidence to suggest that the unusual contours of the site and the surrounding area may be related to the town defences known as the Tonman (Townsmen) Ditch, the medieval borough boundary. Excavations that have been carried out in the area have confirmed the presence of earthworks, although their exact date and function was not verified. The area has also produced evidence for a Roman cremation cemetery.

The Victoria Playing Field was presented to the City of St Albans as a recreation ground in 1898, by Charles and Mary Woollam. This generous gift stipulated that 'the field shall be used for children to play in, and that it be called the Victoria Playing Field'. The city undertook to maintain the land as a public open space for this purpose.

Extracts taken from minutes of a meeting of the St Albans City Council, held on Wednesday 9<sup>th</sup> November 1898 recorded that 'Mr Charles Woollam attended and handed to the Mayor the deed of conveyance to the Town Council of the Victoria Playing Field, duly executed by him and Mrs Woollam. The Mayor in accepting the deed of gift expressed on behalf of the Council their very hearty thanks to Mr and Mrs Woollam for the gift'.

Charles Woollam was a local businessman who became Mayor in 1872. His philanthropy extended to gifts to the Abbey and to St Albans School, and he was also the founder of the Girls High School. He was made an Honorary Freeman of the City in 1905 in recognition of his involvement in public works. The land which is now the Old Albanian Sports Club and the playing fields of St Albans School are named 'Woollams' in honour of Charles and Mary Woollam.

There is evidence that the playing field was used for sport before Charles Woollam made his generous gift: a painting depicting a cricket match on the site exists and has been dated to circa 1858.

## **2.7 HABITATS AND WILDLIFE**

### **2.7.1 Grassland**

The majority of the site is close mown amenity grassland with low ecological value. Some diversity does exist within the areas of longer grass located at the boundary with Verulam Road, where species including red clover, bird's-foot-trefoil and common knapweed persist. Courser grasses are becoming dominant within these areas requiring the management to be intensified, however due to the nature and location of the playing field, increasing diversity through the management of the existing meadows will be a long process with limited scope for improvement.

### **2.7.2 Trees and boundary hedges**

A hawthorn hedge forms the southern boundary with Verulam Road and acts as a linear wildlife corridor. This hedge is currently cut frequently to maintain its formal appearance. The northern boundary along Folly Lane is formed of dense laurel and scrub.

There are a number of mature trees present within the playing field including common lime and London plane. The tree avenue along the eastern boundary is largely complete, with a small number of gaps. The standard trees along the boundary with Verulam Road are evenly spaced and have a good open grown form. However those within the north-east and north-west corners are congested, competing with each other for the available light and water resources.

### **2.7.3 Bats**

The playing field provides habitat for bats. The local community and school have been involved in putting up bat boxes around the site, which are now used as roosts. Changes to the trees, grass and planting on the green space needs to be sensitive to the requirements of these important indicator species.

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

### **2.8.1 Access and Circulation**

The playing field is open to the public seven days a week and 365 days a year with the community enjoying unrestricted access to all parts of the site.

There are two pedestrian access points located off both Folly Lane and Verulam Road, effectively allowing access from each corner of the site. The eastern two access points are linked by a hard surfaced path, which provides a safe short cut between the two roads. There is no on-site car parking, and the nearby roads are within the controlled car parking schemes. This means that for normal use people visiting Victoria Playing Field are restricted to walking or cycling. There is a pedestrian crossing point over Verulam Road.

Two further access points exist off Verulam Road, which consist of small holes in the boundary hedge kept open by informal use. These discrete access points are an important feature of the site having been in existence for almost 100 years and can be seen on the 1924 and 1937-9 Ordnance Survey Maps (see Appendix 1).

There is vehicle access to the site off Folly Lane, which is used by the grounds maintenance contractor. It is also used to provide access for vehicles and equipment required for major community events managed by FVPP, primarily Larks in the Parks. Within the playing field there is a circular pedestrian route which links to all the entrances and the children's play area. The majority of this route is unsurfaced.

## 2.8.2 Site Furniture

Notice boards are situated at the majority of the access points and are constructed in differing styles. Cabinet style notice boards bearing the St Albans City and District Council logo are used and managed by the Council and friends group to display upcoming events and community notices. Older open-fronted boards are primarily used by local business such as the local theatre to display forthcoming shows. These boards are unmanaged and generally display out of date information.

Other furniture on site includes numerous benches, litter bins, a basketball hoop, football posts and a children's play area. The children's play area caters for younger children and needs some updating to provide play equipment for a more diverse age range.

The site is securely fenced with estate style fencing, with only one vehicular access route. This is kept locked and used for grounds maintenance and during community events.

## 2.9 COMMUNITY, MANAGEMENT AND EVENTS

### 2.9.1 Community

St Albans is a diverse and multi-cultural city. Victoria Playing Field is located in St Peters Ward and on the boundaries of Batchwood and Verulam Wards. The demographics of these three wards show a great deal of variation, and actions in this management plan should take account of the high diversity of site users.

St Peters has a relatively dense population and low average house prices compared to the rest of the district, the highest proportion of people aged 25-44 in the district, and an ethnicity which reflects the district average. Batchwood is closer to the district average in house prices, has a moderately high representation of people of working age and slightly low number of older people, and is relatively diverse with a high proportion of Asian residents.



Verulam has a low population density and high house prices compared to the district average. The rate of 15-24 year olds is the lowest in the district and there are a high proportion of people aged 65 and older. It has a high proportion of white residents.

Broad demographics for the three wards are described in the following tables:

### General

	St Peters	Batchwood	Verulam	SADC average
Number of Residents	7602	7703	6404	
Dwellings	3836	2940	2816	
Ward Size (Hectares)	128	215	362	
Person Per Hectare	59	35	18	
House Prices (average)	£319,419	£374,703	£522,549	£427,664
Electoral Turn Out (excl. postal)	26%	32%	40%	30%

SOURCES: Office for National Statistics Census 2011, SADC May 2013, Land Registry 2012/13

### Age Profile

	St Peters (%)	Batchwood (%)	Verulam (%)	St Albans (%)	England (%)
0 – 14	19	23	19	20	18
15 – 24	8	11	8	10	13
25 – 44	47	31	25	29	28
45 – 64	18	23	29	26	25
64+	10	13	23	16	16

SOURCE: Office for National Statistics Census 2011

### Ethnicity

	St Peters (%)	Batchwood (%)	Verulam (%)	St Albans (%)	England (%)
White	87	84	94	88	86
Mixed/Multiple Ethnic Groups	3	4	2	3	2
Asian/Asian British	7	9	3	6	8
Black/African/Caribbean /Black British	2	2	1	2	3
Other Ethnic Group	1	1	0	1	1

SOURCE: Office for National Statistics Census 2011

There are a number of community buildings and schools located in the immediate surroundings of Victoria Playing Field, including Muriel Green Nursery, The Royal British Legion and Aboyne Lodge School.

### 2.9.2 Local Community Groups

The Friends of Victoria Playing Field are a small but dedicated voluntary organisation consisting of some of the local residents who use and enjoy the playing field on a regular basis. The objective of the friends group is to:

- Bring together those who care about the playing field
- Encourage thoughtful consideration of proposals made for the playing field
- Liaise with agencies which have an interest in, and responsibility for the playing field
- Promote activities to transform good ideas for the field into reality

- Enable as many people as possible to enjoy this valued space
- Encourage measures to achieve its care and maintenance, both in the short and long term

### 2.9.3 Events

The playing field hosts a number of community events which have included:

- Grand cricket match
- Tree planting
- Bulb planting

The flagship event for the playing field is Larks in the Park. This event is held across St Albans at a number of greenspaces and is a free family event attracting over 1000 visitors to the playing field.

## 3. ANALYSIS AND EVALUATION

### 3.1 A WELCOMING PLACE

The FVPF have identified through their research a need for play equipment for older children on the playing field. This is a high priority for investment, and potential funding options which would provide this new play equipment as well as funding improvements to access and information provision should be investigated. The provision of play equipment should also be rationalised, bringing the basketball hoop closer to the play area and surfacing the area around it to make it more functional. Retaining the area of laurel close to the play area for natural play would also be valuable, maintaining enough to stimulate imaginative and challenging play activities.

The only existing surfaced path on the site links the two eastern access points. This limits access to the majority of the playing field for members of the community who are only able to use surfaced paths, and during the winter months. Providing another surfaced route between the play area and the western entrance off Folly Lane would improve access to the remainder of the site, and give people the opportunity to walk through the site heading into or out of the city.

Improving access to the playing field can also be achieved by enhancing site entrances. The western entrance off Folly Lane has been recently restored, but the remainder have not been. The western entrance off Verulam Road is in particular need of rationalisation and surfacing. Improvements could also be made to the north eastern entrance to the playing field, to provide access at this point for people with wheelchairs or buggies. All access improvements should take into account the safety of site users, including young children from the adjacent school. In addition, the estate fencing around the site perimeter would benefit from some restoration work.

Two of the informal access points along the hedge should be retained and restored, with improvements to their safety, as they are historical features of the playing field. Grass paths can be mown through the summer meadow from these points, providing direct access to the centre of the playing field. With the summer meadow extended to the hedge, grass paths should also be mown close to the Verulam Road boundary. These would continue to provide

a circular walking route but also wind out into the centre of the site, encouraging visitors to use all parts of the playing field.

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

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

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

Refuse collection is covered under the existing grounds maintenance contract: see the SADC Grounds Maintenance Specification:

- Section 8 – Litter and Debris Collection
- Section 8.1 – Bin Emptying
- Section 8.2 – Storage of Cleared litter
- Section 8.3 – Leaf Collection

Refuse bins are also emptied throughout the week to prevent them becoming more than three quarters full. The effectiveness of the grounds maintenance contract is monitored to ensure the maintenance of the site reaches the required standard.

To protect the trees within the amenity grassland area from being damaged by grounds maintenance contractors, it is advisable to create tree pits around them, and fill these with woodchip. This is particularly important if any new tree planting is undertaken.

### **3.4 SUSTAINABILITY**

Formal flower beds are felt to be inappropriate given the informal nature of the space so, should any groupings of plants be introduced, the plants used will be sown directly into the area concerned. Peat is not used as a growing medium by SADC.

All green waste created through the grounds maintenance operations is used by SADC's grounds maintenance contractor John O'Conner within the formal flower beds throughout the District.

Any new or replacement wooden site furniture should be of FSC standard.

### **3.5 CONSERVATION AND HERITAGE**

To enhance both the appearance and the conservation value of the site, the existing summer meadow should be both extended to the hedge line along Verulam Road and in places enhanced with wild flowers. This can be achieved by preparing the ground and introducing species from seed. Seed should be purchased from a reputable supplier containing native species of local provenance. Small areas should be trialled initially and the success monitored. New summer meadows could also be created in well-chosen areas around other boundaries.

Establishment of wild flowers is most likely to be successful where more sunlight reaches the ground, and therefore the area proposed for enhancement is away from the trees found



along much of the southern boundary. In the year following sowing of wild flower seed, this area should be mown with the amenity grass to aid establishment. In the following years it will be mown with the rest of the summer meadow. This action will only be worthwhile if the standard management for conservation grassland – an annual late summer cut and lift of vegetation – is followed every year.

A good way to define these summer meadows is by planting spring bulbs along their edges. This is a good community activity and is an attractive method of marking to the grounds maintenance team which areas should be cut less frequently.

Along the northern boundary, the scrub has some ecological value and should be retained. However the majority of the laurel should be removed as it has very little value to wildlife, retaining a small section for natural play. A new hedge with associated shrubs should be planted along this boundary using species that:

- Provide colour and interest for visitors
- Support a diverse range of wildlife
- Ensure ease of maintenance for grounds staff
- Provide the same level of shelter from traffic on Folly Lane, partly by ensuring the area of planting is broad enough

The congested area of trees in the north-east corner of the site should be thinned, retaining feature trees or those with a good form or shape. This will benefit the health and structure of those trees which remain. The trees along the northern boundary around the north eastern entrance from Folly Lane should be considered as part of this thinning operation.

The northern part of the eastern boundary is at the bottom of a steep embankment up to the neighbouring NHS property. The slope is untended, very overgrown and includes some very large mature trees heavily overgrown with ivy. This, natural groundwater percolation, and storm run-off from the car park on the NHS property, makes for a dark, damp and often flooded patch of the playing field that is a challenge to manage or use. The action plan should include SADC contact with the NHS to seek to improve this boundary of the playing field. Management of this area could be coordinated with the thinning of trees in the north east corner of the site.

The Trees and Woodland Department of SADC is currently producing a Tree Strategy that will cover all open spaces and parks within the District. This will help guide the planting of any new trees within the playing field.

There is some opportunity for new tree planting on the playing field. Along the avenue at the eastern end of the site, there are a few gaps where tree planting would make the avenue neater. There is also potentially room to plant one or two standards, such as oak, to provide a feature within the amenity grass area in the centre of the site, attracting visitors into the central space without either impinging on the football pitches or preventing the use of the space as an occasional cricket pitch.

### **3.6 COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT**

Every opportunity should be taken to encourage the use of the playing field by the local community, and the involvement of the community in its management. It would be valuable

to develop links between the playing field and the local community, for example local schools, which could use the playing field as a base for outside learning.

The Friends of Victoria Playing Field are an active community group, providing an ideal basis for community involvement in the site. This includes encouraging as many people as possible to use the site and making a contribution to its positive management. SADC should work with CMS to help support the friends group to achieve its aims.

### **3.7 MARKETING**

Although there are lockable noticeboards at the entrances to the playing field, no interpretation is currently provided. New interpretation boards would provide orientation for visitors and information on the history and wildlife of the site. This would help people understand the site and enjoy everything it has to offer. These boards could be installed at selected entrances.

As the lockable noticeboards were only recently installed it would not be appropriate to replace them. This means that any new interpretation should be designed in a similar style.

The lockable noticeboards should continue to be used to promote the FVPF and events at the playing field, and the SADC website can be used to publicise the site more widely. The existing text on the SADC website should be updated to better promote the playing field.

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

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

To provide a welcoming open greenspace for the enjoyment of the local community.

- A1: Investigate funding options for a site wide project to provide new play equipment for older children, as well as fund access improvements and on-site information provision.
- A2: Provide new play equipment for older children.
- A3: Move basketball hoop nearer to the play area and install hard surface around it.
- A4: Retain laurel near the play area for natural play.
- A5: Restore estate fencing around the perimeter of the playing field.
- A6: Enhance entrances off Folly Lane and Verulam Road.
- A7: Surface path from western entrance off Folly Lane to the play area.
- A8: Retain and restore informal access points through the hedge on Verulam Road.
- A9: Cut grass paths through the summer meadows.

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

To ensure that all site facilities and infrastructure are safe, serviceable and fit for purpose.

- B1: Complete formal tree inspection every three years.

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

Ensure that the site is kept clean and all aspects of the site is well maintained.

- C1: Create tree pits and fill with woodchip around trees in amenity grass to protect against grounds maintenance operations.
- C2: Monitor the grounds maintenance contract to ensure compliance.

##### **D. SUSTAINABILITY**

Ensure compliance with the council's environmental policies and seek sustainable activities where relevant and appropriate to the playing field.

- D1: Ensure that all new and replacement wooden site furniture is of FSC standard.



D2: Ensure that all contractors used on site adhere to sustainable and environmental policies.

## **E. CONSERVATION AND HERITAGE**

Conserve, enhance and communicate the heritage and biodiversity value of the playing field.

- E1: Extend the summer meadow and enhance with wild flowers where appropriate.
- E2: Remove majority of laurel along the northern boundary and plant a mixed native hedgerow along this boundary.
- E3: Plant spring bulbs along the boundaries of the summer meadows.
- E4: Thin trees in the north eastern corner of the site, including along the northern boundary.
- E5: Extend tree avenue along the eastern boundary.
- E6: Plant standards within the amenity grass area.
- E7: Make contact with the NHS to seek an improvement in management of the eastern boundary.

## **F. COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT**

Encourage the use of the playing field by the wider community.

- F1: Develop links with the local community including local schools to use the playing field as a base for outside learning.
- F2: Work with the Countryside Management Service to support the Friends of Victoria Playing Field.

## **G. MARKETING**

Develop ways to attract a wide range of visitors to the playing field through a range of media.

- G1: Design and install interpretation boards at selected entrances which provide orientation for visitors and information on the history and wildlife of the playing field.
- G2: Advertise the Friends Group through the on-site notice boards.
- G3: Continue to publicise the playing field through the SADC website.



# Victoria Playing Field Year 1 Action Plan 2016 - 2017



- Who
- SADC
  - CMS
  - FVPF
  - JOC

- Key**
- Basketball hoop
  - Bench
  - Dog bin
  - Litter bin
  - Lockable noticeboard
  - Pedestrian access
  - Vehicular access
  - Trees
  - Conservation cut grass
  - Amenity grass
  - Hedge
  - Football pitch
  - Play area
  - Steps
  - Hard surface

Retain laurel near play area for natural play

Remove laurel along the northern boundary and replant with mixed native hedgerow

Create tree pits and fill with woodchip around trees in amenity grass to protect against grounds maintenance operations

Enhance parts of the summer meadow with native wild flowers

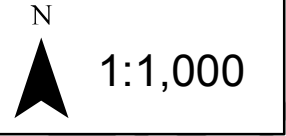
Extend summer meadow along the southern and western boundaries to hedgeline

Cut grass paths through summer meadows

Cut summer meadow

Investigate funding options for play area, access and interpretation project, and for tree and scrub work

Update the entry on the SADC website for the playing field



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# Victoria Playing Field Year 2 Action Plan 2017 - 2018

- Who
- SADC
  - CMS
  - FVVPF
  - JOC

### Key

- Basketball hoop
- Bench
- Dog bin
- Litter bin
- Lockable noticeboard
- Pedestrian access
- Vehicular access
- Trees
- Grass with wild flowers
- Conservation cut grass
- Amenity grass
- Hedge
- Football pitch
- Play area
- Steps
- Hard surface



- Implement play area, access and interpretation project
- Restore estate railings around the perimeter of the site
- Plant spring bulbs along the boundaries of the summer meadows
- Make contact with the NHS to seek an improvement in management of the eastern boundary

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# Victoria Playing Field Year 3 Action Plan 2018 - 2019

- Who
- SADC
  - CMS
  - FVPF
  - JOC

Enhance entrances off Folly Lane and Verulam Road

Surface path from western entrance off Folly Lane to play area

Enhance entrances off Folly Lane and Verulam Road

Plant standard(s) within the amenity grass area

Restore informal access points in hedge along Verulam Road

Maintain grass paths

Cut summer meadow

**Key**

- Basketball hoop
- Bench
- Dog bin
- Interpretation
- Litter bin
- Lockable noticeboard
- Pedestrian access
- Vehicular access
- Trees
- Grass with wild flowers
- Conservation cut grass
- Amenity grass
- Hedge
- Football pitch
- Play area
- Steps
- Hard surface



St Albans City & District Council

Countryside Management Service

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# Victoria Playing Field Year 4 Action Plan 2019 - 2020

Who

SADC	□
CMS	■
FVPF	■
JOC	■

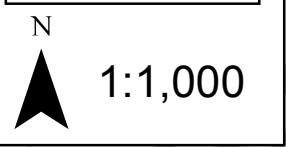
**Key**

●	Basketball hoop
●	Bench
●	Dog bin
●	Interpretation
●	Litter bin
●	Lockable noticeboard
●	Pedestrian access
●	Vehicular access
■	Trees
■	Enhanced grass
■	Conservation cut grass
■	Amenity grass
■	Hedge
■	Football pitch
■	Play area
■	Steps
■	Hard surface



Maintain grass paths

Cut summer meadow



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# Victoria Playing Field Year 5 Action Plan 2020 - 2021

Who

SADC	□
CMS	■
FVPF	■
JOC	■

**Key**

- Basketball hoop
- Bench
- Dog bin
- Interpretation
- Litter bin
- Lockable noticeboard
- Pedestrian access
- Vehicular access
- Trees

**sd year 4**

**DESCRPTIO**

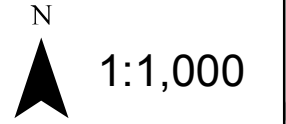
- Enhanced grass
- Conservation cut grass
- Amenity grass
- Hedge
- Football pitch
- Play area
- Steps
- Hard surface



Maintain grass paths

Cut summer meadow

Draft new Greenspace Action Plan 2021 - 2026



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## 6 SPECIFICATIONS

### A6 (1): Enhance north eastern entrance off Folly Lane

- a) Remove a section of estate fencing immediately east of the top of the steps to create space for a new path.
- b) Create a new surfaced path 1.5 metres wide which follows the slope east from the top of the steps and bends back to meet the bottom of the steps. This should be of the length required to achieve a maximum gradient of 1:20. Exact route to be agreed in site meeting and marked by supervising officer.
- c) Follow the specification for A7, b-h.

### A6 (2): Enhance south western entrance off Verulam Road

- a) Remove two existing steps and fill in the immediate area to create a surfaced entrance 1.5 metres wide and 5m long, and with a maximum gradient of 1:20 which grades into the adjoining ground.
- b) Follow the specification for A7, b-h.

### A7: Surface path from western entrance off Folly Lane to the play area

- a) Create a new surfaced path that is 1.5 metres wide and 170 metres long, with a finish that has no trip hazards. Path to run from the playground to the north western entrance off Folly Lane. Exact route to be agreed in site meeting and marked by supervising officer.
- b) Excavate path area to a depth of 100mm. All soft spots to be excavated back to firm ground with the purpose of achieving best surface drainage of the finished route, with hollows filled & compacted with sub-base to ensure even, firm base layer. Lay a non-woven geotextile, such as Terram 1500 or similar and approved. Any joins in geotextile to have a minimum of 300mm overlap.
- c) Spread, grade and thoroughly compact a dense, tight, even base course, surface with constant fall, granite aggregate 50 mm to dust to a finished depth of not less than 100mm. Ensure the width of the surfaced area is at least 1.5 metres wide and that the geotextile membrane is covered at this stage.
- d) Spread, grade and thoroughly compact to a dense, tight, even surface, a layer of well graded granite aggregate 6 mm to dust as surface dressing. Finished compacted depth to be not less than 45 mm. Edging to be lost in adjoining ground and base course to be completely covered.
- e) Material must be completely free from deleterious materials (e.g. glass or metal) and any protruding objects should be removed.
- f) Path to have a final camber or cross-fall (as appropriate to slope) of 1:20 and start of the surfaced section should be edged flush up to existing path surfaces.
- g) Use any spoil to build up the shoulders of the path, backfill any hollows adjacent to the path and level the ground layer. It may be possible to use some spoil for actions A6 and A8. All surplus spoil should be removed from the site.
- h) All care must be taken to avoid damage to tree roots greater than 25mm in diameter, amending path gradient if necessary. If unavoidable, roots to be cut as close to 90° to axis as possible with a sharp tool.

A8: Retain and restore informal access points through the hedge on Verulam Road

- a) Restore the two informal access points in the hedge adjacent to Hill Street and Portland Street.
- b) Remove any temporary fencing and prune the hedge to leave a gap 1 metre wide in each location.
- c) Use spoil from action A7 or other material to build up the ground level so it slopes smoothly down into the site from the pavement, filling in the steps which have developed at each location.
- d) In the third access point where an arch of hedge remains, action TBC.

E1: Enhance part of the summer meadow with wild flowers

- a) This work should be undertaken while the grass is short, ideally in October.
- b) The work can be undertaken by volunteers or a contractor.
- c) The initial sowing area selected covers 250m<sup>2</sup>.
- d) The ground within the sowing area should be scarified using a mechanical scarifier, and approximately 60-70% of the soil should be visible once scarification is complete.
- e) Across the prepared area, seed should be hand sown thinly at approximately 2g of seed per square metre.
- f) Damp sand should be mixed with the seed to act as a carrier and identify where seeds has been sown.
- g) Immediately after sowing the ground should be rolled using a heavy roller, to ensure the seed is fully in contact with the soil.
- h) In the year following sowing, bring the section into the amenity mowing regime. Restore it to the conservation cut regime two years after sowing.
- i) Sow a mixture of native wildflowers which will provide a variety of colours throughout the spring and summer:

Yellow Rattle	<i>Rhinanthus minor</i>
Cowslip	<i>Primula veris</i>
Meadow Buttercup	<i>Ranunculus acris</i>
Black Knapweed	<i>Centaurea nigra</i>
Oxeye Daisy	<i>Leucanthemum vulgare</i>
Field Scabious	<i>Knautia arvensis</i>
Agrimony	<i>Agrimonia eupatoria</i>
Meadow Cranesbill	<i>Geranium pratense</i>
Harebell	<i>Campanula rotundifolia</i>
Musk Mallow	<i>Malva moschata</i>
Perforate St. John's Wort	<i>Hypericum perforatum</i>
Common Toadflax	<i>Linaria vulgaris</i>
Common Verbena	<i>Verbena officinalis</i>
Lady's Bedstraw	<i>Galium verum</i>
Common Bird's-foot Trefoil	<i>Lotus corniculatus</i>
Tufted Vetch	<i>Vicia cracca</i>
Selfheal	<i>Prunella vulgaris</i>
Wild Majorom	<i>Origanum vulgare</i>
Meadow Vetchling	<i>Lathyrus pratensis</i>
Wild Carrot	<i>Daucus carota</i>

## E2 (1): Clear the majority of laurel along the northern boundary

- a) Clear the large patch of laurel which extends from close to the north western corner towards the play area, leaving the smaller patch close to the play area.
- b) Fell all laurel bushes to ground level, and treat all stumps to prevent regrowth.
- c) All felled material to be removed from site.

## E2 (2): Plant a mixed native hedgerow along the northern boundary

- a) See appendix 2 – hedge planting guidance notes.
- b) Plant a hedgerow along the northern boundary from the north western entrance to the area of laurel which will be retained for natural play. This is a length of around 160m.
- c) The species mix used should provide colour and interest for visitors, support a diverse range of wildlife, and ensure ease of maintenance for grounds maintenance staff. Use 50% common hawthorn (*Crataegus monogyna*) and a mixture of other native species such as field maple (*Acer campestre*), hazel (*Corylus avellana*), dog rose (*Rosa canina*), dogwood (*Cornus sanguinea*), spindle (*Euonymus europaea*), buckthorn (*Rhamnus cathartica*), alder buckthorn (*Frangula alnus*), guelder rose (*Viburnum opulus*) and wayfaring tree (*Viburnum lantana*).
- d) In addition to the hedgerow, associated shrubs from the same species mix should be planted within the boundary so that once full grown the hedgerow and shrubs cover a similar area and provide similar protection from the road to the existing laurel.

## E3: Plant spring bulbs along the boundaries of the summer meadows

- a) Plant between October and December, before the first frost.
- b) Plant to a depth of approximately 12.5cm, or 3x the size of the bulb.
- c) The line of planting will be pre marked by the supervising officer before planting commences. It will follow the boundary of the summer meadows from close to the south eastern entrance to close to the playground and will therefore have a length of around 350m.
- d) Taking a handful of bulbs, scatter along the line of planting with the aim of achieving the greatest density along the line, gradually thinning out into the summer meadow. As a guide this could be approximately 20 bulbs per square metre.
- e) Any bulbs that fall outside the line should be kicked back into the planting zone.
- f) Plant the bulbs where they land using a bulb planting tool or other suitable tool to remove a core of turf/soil. Place the bulbs in the hole with their roots pointing downwards.
- g) Replace the turf/soil into the hole.
- h) Firm down the turf/soil to ensure it meets the surrounding ground level, and to prevent squirrels removing the core and eating the bulbs.

## E4: Thin trees in the north eastern corner of the site

- a) Trees to be felled either by contractor by chainsaw. Stumps to be cut as low as possible and treated to prevent regrowth.
- b) All felled material to be removed from site.



- c) Trees should be selected to be felled individually, choosing the weaker specimens or those which are growing particularly closely together, with the aim of bringing more light to the ground and encouraging the development of ground flora while supporting the development of the trees that remain.
- d) Work should take place between November and the end of March to avoid the bird nesting season.

#### E5/E6: Tree planting and aftercare for planted trees

- a) Remove plants from containers or fabric wrapping. Tease out and spread the roots to get an idea of their spread. Dig a planting hole that is no deeper than the roots, but is up to three times the diameter of the root system. If the sides or base of the planting hole are compacted, break the soil up with a fork before planting.
- b) Place the plant in the planting hole. Insert a stake if required. Small trees do not require staking but top-heavy or larger specimens should be staked. Refill the planting hole carefully, placing soil between and around all the roots to eliminate air pockets.
- c) There is little evidence that adding extra fertiliser and organic matter to the planting hole helps; in fact this practice can hinder plant establishment as the organic matter decomposes and may cause the plant to sink. There is also less incentive for the roots to grow out into the surrounding soil. Firm the soil gently, avoiding compacting the soil into a hard mass.
- d) Drought stress is common with newly planted trees and shrubs. Even in a cool, wet summer, the rain rarely replenishes soil moisture stores fully. The soil may be dry around the roots even when the surface appears moist. Dry, windy conditions are especially likely to lead to water shortages. With experience it is possible to detect the first signs of water shortage, however by this stage the tree has already been damaged. Ideally anticipate water loss and irrigate regularly whilst the tree is establishing and especially during draught conditions.
- e) Weeds and other vegetation intercept water before it reaches the roots of newly planted trees and shrubs. Keep a vegetation-free circle at least 1.2m (4ft) in diameter around the plant for its first three years to help avoid this problem. The circle can be kept weed free through hoeing or use of contact or systemic weed killers if appropriate. Laying mulch over this circle is also helpful, although take care to leave a collar of 10cm (4in) around the woody stems that is free of mulch, to prevent the risk of rotting to the bark.
- f) For action E5 use tree species in line with the SADC Tree Strategy which is currently in development.
- g) For action E6 select a tree species suited to the role as a standard, like oak (*Quercus robur*).

#### G1: Design and produce interpretation boards

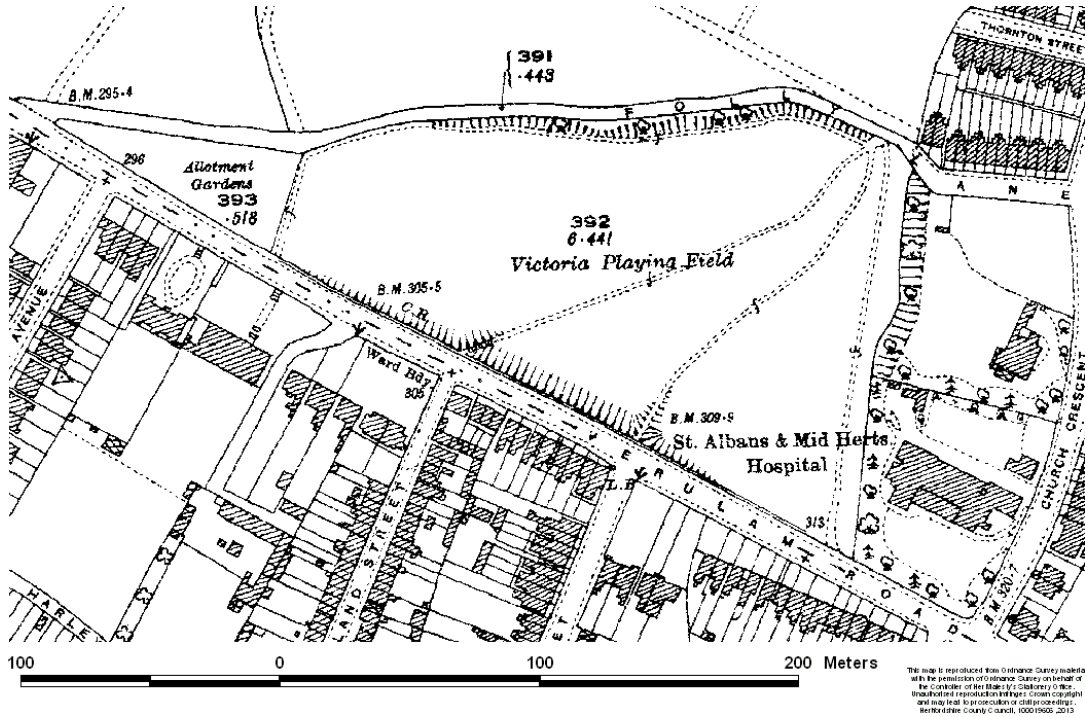
- a) Design and produce an A2 interpretation board which provides orientation for visitors and information on the history and wildlife of the playing field, and provide PDF version of the same.
- b) Design to be based around an A3 watercolour composition and photographs, and to follow the SADC house style.
- c) Provide two proof stages of full colour design in hard copy and PDF format.

- d) Supply an upright frame in green powder coated stainless steel, twin leg, incorporating a GRP panel.
- e) Quantity: 2.
- f) Deliver to CMS for installation by volunteers.

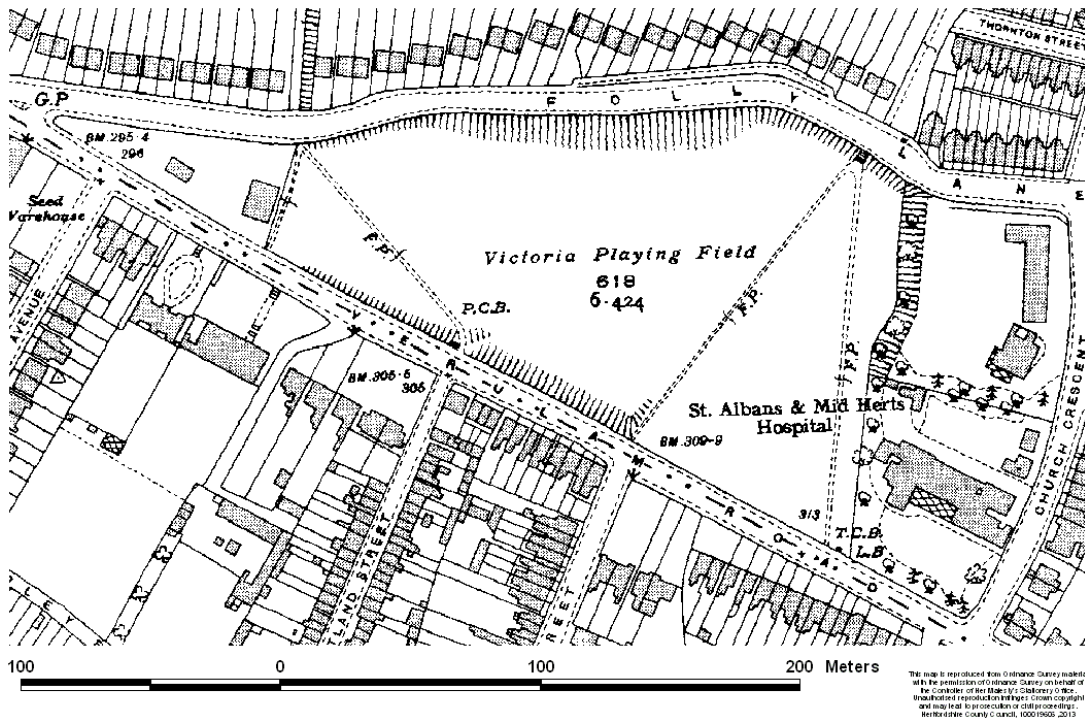
# 7 APPENDICES

## Appendix 1 – 1924 and 1937-9 Ordnance Survey maps of Victoria Playing Field

### Victoria Playing Field - OS map 1924



### Victoria Playing Field - OS map 1937-39



## Appendix 2 – Hedge planting guidance notes

Planting a new hedge is a long term commitment and should be considered carefully. This leaflet aims to outline the main points that will ensure success.

### Site Preparation

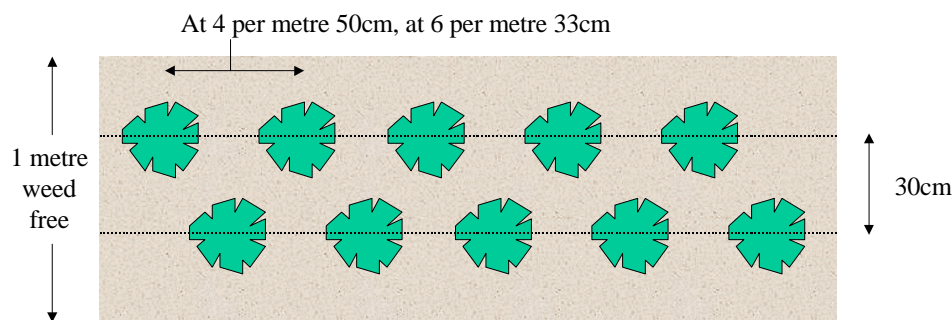
To aid establishment the site should be prepared prior to planting. Plough, rotovate or dig a strip 60cm wide by 30cm deep and create a weed free strip about 1m wide, either by cultivation or herbicide.

### Plant Selection

Bare root transplants of 30cm to 60cm should be used, of a species mix which matches surrounding hedges. For further advice on suitable species contact your local CMS officer.

As a basic guide the species mix should be predominantly hawthorn. You may use blackthorn but be aware that it suckers vigorously and you may therefore wish to leave it out.

### Planting Layout



To this a small proportion of shrubs indicative of the local area could be included, but when doing this avoid regular spacing as this may create a striped unnatural effect.

### Planting Out

Plant out as soon as possible after obtaining the plants. All roots should be protected while exposed to prevent drying out or frost damage. This includes during planting out when a slight breeze can soon dry the roots.

Plant during the winter, or ideally late autumn or early spring to avoid heavy frosts, but while the soil is moist.

If the ground is very soft or has been cultivated then slot planting maybe an option otherwise pit planting is better.

The plants should be spaced in a staggered double row with 4 to 6 plants per metre.

### Protection

Wild animals such as rabbits, voles or deer can decimate a newly planted hedge so protection of new plants is essential. Individual guards are generally the easiest way though fencing maybe an option.

### Types of Guards

Spiral guards – These expand with the growing plant and protect from browsing animals. Clear guards are generally preferable.

Plastic mesh guards – These can be used where branching is a problem such as with holly.

Tree shelters – While protecting the plant these also aid the trees early development by providing a sheltered environment, but will restrict lateral growth.

Guards should be removed once the plants are well established, say in 3 to 5 years, though caution may be needed where large numbers of rabbits are present.

### **Domestic Animals**

Cattle, sheep and horses may all browse and damage new hedge plants. If they are present then a fence will be required. This should be at least 1m from the hedge and ideally 2m to allow maintenance and prevention of browsing.

### **Weed Problems**

This is perhaps the most important operation when establishing a new hedge and is often overlooked. The main way in which weeds harm new trees is by competing for water and nutrients from the soil. Certain weeds can also smother new plants depriving them of light.

Weed competition not only reduces the survival rate of a new planting, it also dramatically reduces their subsequent growth rate. This can mean the difference between a first year growth rate of 30-40cm and a first year growth rate of just 1-2cm. In extreme cases plants may even experience first year die back. This is more common where standard sized trees are planted.

### **Weed Control**

To prevent weed competition an area 1 metre across should be cleared of vegetation in line with the new hedge. This will require maintenance for the first three years or until the plants become established.

A variety of methods can be used to control weeds as detailed:

Cutting – This will help to control some plants such as nettles and brambles, but will invigorate many others such as grasses and rosette forming herbs, stimulating greater root growth and competition. Where these weeds predominate cutting will be counterproductive.

Hoing – Can be effective but is labour intensive, and great care will be needed around newly established plants in order to not excessively disturb their roots or damage the bark.

Herbicide – This is cheaper than most alternatives, but requires specialist knowledge and equipment. Advice can only be given by a suitably qualified practitioner.

Mulch mats – These are effective but may occasionally harbour small mammals and invertebrate pests.

Organic mulch – An environmental alternative which suppresses weeds before rotting into the soil. The following can be used: wood chips, bark, coconut fibre, grass cuttings, well-rotted horse manure or farm yard manure. A layer about 4" deep will be required to be effective. Some light weeding and topping up of the layer will be needed in following years.

### **Losses**

If all the precautions listed on this sheet are followed then losses should be minimal, however during extreme weather losses may be unavoidable and should be replaced the following year.



### **Hedge Profiles**

An early trim at the end of the first growing season will help to produce a thicker hedge. After this the aim should be to produce a hedge 2 metres tall by about 1.5 metres wide, with an A-shaped profile. If a more vertical profile is needed then chamfered top corners will help to produce a similar effect.

### **Hedgerow Trees**

If hedgerow trees are to be included these should be spaced at least 30m apart to prevent them overshadowing the hedge. To establish trees, they can be planted in the line of the new hedge along with the hedge plants, but use tree shelters to allow their identification during maintenance.

### **Planting Checklist**

- Ground preparation
- Plant selection and species
- Time of year
- Pest protection
- Weed control

## Appendix 3 – Consultation responses

It's obviously appropriate to extend play equipment to be suitable for a wider age range than is presently the case. However, I do feel it's important for play to be challenging and, noting the reference to 'natural play', I hope it will be possible to maintain /provide enough trees/shrubs/bushes to stimulate imaginative and challenging play activities.

2.7 Habitat: This could do with a new para 2.7.3 saying something like:

“The Playing Fields are used by many bats. The local community and school were involved in putting up a good number of bat boxes a few years ago, which are now used as roosts. Changes to the trees, grass and planting on the green space needs to be particularly sensitive to the requirements of these important indicator species.”

2.9.1 Mentions St Peters ward. I think it would be sensible to mention also Batchwood ward as it abuts Victoria Playing Field and contributes significantly to its catchment demographic.

2.9.1 Mentions St Stephens RC infants. This is some mile and a half from Victoria Playing Field, so I do wonder if its existence at the far end of St Peter’s ward is particularly relevant. I doubt they would ever visit Victoria Playing Field

3.1 I welcome the plan to put in a proper path, as suggested in the Action Plan.

3.2 I do question the stated logic regarding sight lines at the north east exit, onto Folly Lane. In my experience the 1.5 to 2 metre drop in land level from the road to the bottom of the Playing Field steps means that people struggling up the steps with children, pushchairs etc can take no advantage of seeing what’s happening on Folly Lane. Indeed, it is not relevant to them at that time, as it is only when they get up onto the pavement that they need consider the traffic. And then, given the beneficial bend in the road, the sycamores are completely out of any sight line.

Further, virtually no one other than hardened allotment users would want to cross Folly lane at that point. It is rather dangerous, it does not lead anywhere significant and there is a light controlled crossing just up the hill to the east for those heading north east. For those foolhardy enough to attempt to cross at the head of the steps, it is the sight line to the west (not the east where the sycamores are) that is the problem, as the bend is disadvantageous there.

There is a reasonable traffic fence on the roadside edge of the pavement just by the steps, which offers good deterrent to small children running out into the road. I think it could be usefully extended a further two fence sections to the east.

If the sight line argument is perhaps about drivers coming east to west along Folly Lane being able to see that pedestrians might be coming out of the Playing Field, I think that the drop in land level would frustrate that sight line even if the sycamores were removed. Certainly reinstating even a low level hedge would put sight lines back to where they are now.

Drivers do go too fast downhill round the bend at that point on Folly Lane, and smash up the pedestrian guard rail every couple of years. Perhaps harsher signage would be more likely to have the desired effect.

I don’t like the sycamores (other than them providing aphids as good foraging for bats) and wouldn’t mind them coming out. But I would like to be clear that the sightline issue (to the extent that it is more than theoretical) would not be solved by chopping down the trees.

3.5 I like the extension of the summer meadow with cut paths through it. I would just caution that the previous attempt to establish a flower friendly meadow was not very successful largely because the necessary cutting regime (including removal of cuttings) was not followed, resulting in not very good quality scruffy rough grass of little interest.

I also note that the large trees on much of the patch give heavy shade that will prevent good

<p>flower/ summer pasture below them. Good for nettles and rank grass, but not a lot else. Better to cut those dark areas short, in my view.</p>
<p>3.5 Thinning trees in the north east corner is a very good idea. It needs to be pretty radical, not just chopping off a few branches. Whole trees need to be removed.</p>
<p>3.5. I would suggest that the Plan should also include the following sentiment “the northern part of the eastern boundary is at the bottom of a 3 metre high steep embankment up to the neighbouring NHS property. The slope is untended, very overgrown and includes some very large mature trees heavily overgrown with ivy. This and natural groundwater percolation, and storm run-off from car parking on the NHS property, makes for a dark, damp/often flooded patch of the Playing Field that is a challenge to manage or use. The Action Plan should include SADC contact with NHS so as to improve this boundary of the Playing Field.”</p> <p>Further to the preceding para, I doubt whether the summer meadow patch shown on eastern edge of the map for 2017-18 would be at all successful.</p>
<p>3.7 I particularly support, and would prioritise “A8” informal access points through the hedge on Verulam Road.</p>
<p>I particularly like the idea of a summer meadow with bulbs and the enhanced hedgerow</p>
<p>I do not understand the benefit of cutting down the sycamore trees near Folly Lane. The trees protect the park from the road noise but as there are steps down into the park are not too intrusive from the road. The trees help to maintain a peaceful and non- urban feel to the park.</p> <p>Please do not cut down the sycamore trees.</p>
<p>Section 2.4. I suggest this be expanded to include reference to the Field's status as Asset of Community Value. Possibly something along the following lines: "In July 2015 St Albans District Council approved a request by the Friends of the Victoria Playing Field that the Field be included in the Council's register of assets of community value [i.e. that it is land of importance to the local community which is subject to additional protection from development under the Localism Act 2011]. The registration lasts for 5 years from 6th July 2015."</p>
<p>2.7.1 I think that this could be worded a little more positively – perhaps if it finished by saying something like "however due to the nature and location of the playing field, increasing diversity through the management of the existing meadows will be a long process with limited scope for improvement."</p>
<p>2.8.1 Para 4 refers to vehicle access for community events. As worded I think that it is open to possible misinterpretation and could suggest that access is available for football etc. so I suggest rewording as follows: "There is vehicle access to the site off Folly Lane, which is used by the grounds maintenance contractor. It is also used to provide access for vehicles and equipment required for major community events managed by FVPF, primarily Larks in the Parks."</p>
<p>3.1 Para 1, penultimate line, delete y from "they"</p>
<p>3.4 The previous reference to introducing "focal points made up of beds of annual wildflowers" within the areas of amenity grass has been deleted as we suggested. Our reasoning for suggesting that was that we felt reference to beds was inappropriate as we were keen to retain the informal nature of the space. That being the case I would question the need to make any reference to "formal flower beds" but, should it be deemed necessary I would suggest rewording as follows: "Formal flower beds are felt to be inappropriate given the informal nature of the space so, should any groupings of plants be introduced, the plants used will be sown directly into the area concerned. Peat is not used as a growing medium by SADC."</p>
<p>3.5 para 6 refers to there being "room to plant one or two standards, such as oak, to provide a</p>

feature within the amenity grass area in the centre of the site, attracting visitors into the central space". When we walked around the space earlier this year to discuss ideas with CMS we indicated that we were concerned that this could restrict the space available either for football or for our annual cricket match against the Council. With that in mind therefore I suggest that we should seek to have this section reworded along the following lines: "There is also potentially room to plant one or two standards, such as oak, to provide a feature within the amenity grass area in the centre of the site, attracting visitors into the central space without either impinging upon the football pitches or preventing the use of the space as an occasional cricket pitch".

3.6, para 2. Although I'm a little suspicious of what is meant by developing the Friends we should, I think, specifically welcome the recommendation that SADC work with CMS to help support FVPF to achieve its aims.

I have a query with the sycamores coming down near the folly lane play area entrance. If there is an issue with maintenance or safety, I can understand thinning, but I would be concerned to see a dramatic change here. That area is enjoyed by both dog walkers and children, and novice cyclists, and is a great expression of the seasonal changes. I may have misinterpreted the level of change here, but I think the charm of the borders (their slightly wild and not too manicured nature) and the protection from the sight of traffic are valuable things that should not be lost too readily.

My second concern is the plan to remove almost all of the laurel in the north east border section except by the play area. If the replanting here is with native shrub, will they reach the same height, and provide the same level of shelter when you are in the park, as the current greenery from the traffic on folly lane? I have found also that older children (5-8 year olds) enjoy playing here too, enjoying the undergrowth and the micro cosmos there. The dogs love a good sniff there too.

I realise that the amenity is for the whole community, so a broad consensus is needed, but considering how urban the ward is, and the existence of more managed parks elsewhere in St Albans, I am keen to retain the leafy haven provided here.

I appreciate that The Friends of Victoria Playing Fields have been staunch protectors of this park, and will only be looking to progress plans that mean it stays as a park embraced by the local community, so I am hoping my anxiety here is linked to a lack of vision on my part as to how the new layout would be. If there is any links to images of the proposed finished park layout, showing different viewpoints, that would be very useful.

# 1. ADDITIONAL APPENDIX – ACTION PLANS AND MAPS 2024 – 2029

## 1.1 Annual and Regular Actions

**Abbreviations:** CMS – Countryside Management Service, GM – Grounds Maintenance, SADC – St Albans City and District Council, JoC – John O’Connor Grounds Maintenance Contractors, Vols – Volunteers / Friends of Victoria Playing Field

Ref	Action	Obj.	When	Lead	Delivery	Funding	Spec.
0.1	Conservation cut and lift of long grass.	E1	July & Oct	SADC	JoC	GM Budget	2.2
0.2	Assessment to control any invasive non-native species.	E1	May	SADC / CMS	Vols	Internal Resource	2.3
0.3	Annual play area audit safety inspection.		May/June	SADC	SADC	Play Area Budget	
0.4	Identify any play area works required.		Jul - Oct	SADC	SADC	Play Area Budget	
0.5	Prune hedges.	C2	Nov - Feb	SADC	SADC	GM Budget	
0.7	Annual risk assessment and hazard review.		Jan	SADC	SADC	Internal Resource	



0.8	Work identified in annual risk assessment and hazard review.		Jan/Feb	SADC	SADC	GM Budget	
0.9	Amenity mowing / strimming.		Monthly	SADC	JoC	GM Budget	
0.10	Minor tree and shrub bed maintenance.	C2	As required	SADC	JoC	GM Budget	
0.11	Inspect and maintain footpath infrastructure.	C2	Ongoing	SADC	Vols	GM Budget	
0.12	Cut path edges.	C2	Ongoing	SADC	JoC	GM Budget	
0.13	Routine inspections and monitoring of litter picking requirements.	C2	Monthly	SADC	GM	GM Budget	
0.14	Cut back any encroaching vegetation at entrances off Folly Lane and Verulam Road.	A6	As required	SADC	Vols / JoC	GM Budget	2.4
0.15	Remove any encroaching vegetation along the historic access points on Verulam Road.	A8	As required	SADC	Vols	GM Budget	2.4
0.16	Advertise Victoria Playing Field on SADC website.	G3	Ongoing	SADC	SADC		
0.17	Advertise FVPF through the onsite noticeboards and Facebook	G2	Ongoing	SADC	SADC		
0.18	Review previous years action plan.		Yearly	CMS	CMS		

# Victoria Playing Fields

Annual Actions  
GAP 2024 - 2029

## Task Responsibility

- SADC led } Contractor delivered
- CMS led } Contractor delivered
- SADC led } Volunteer delivered
- CMS led } Volunteer delivered

0.2 Assessment to control any invasive non-natives □ □

0.3 Annual play area audit safety inspection □

0.7 Annual risk assessment and hazard review □

0.18 Review previous years actions □

0.14 Cut back any encroaching vegetation at entrance □ □

0.11 Inspect and maintain footpath infrastructure □

0.13 Routine inspections of litter requirements □

0.10 Minor tree and shrub bed maintenance □

0.14 Cut back any encroaching vegetation □ □

0.5 Prune hedges □

0.1 Conservation cut and lift of long grass □

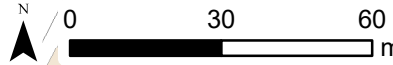
0.15 Cut back encroaching vegetation along historic entrances □ □

0.9 & 0.12 Amenity mowing / strimming and cut path edges □

0.14 Cut back any encroaching vegetation at entrance □ □

## Legend

- Basketball hoop
- Bench
- Dog bin
- Litter bin
- Lockable noticeboard
- Old Noticeboard
- Pedestrian access
- Vehicular access
- Trees
- Conservation cut grass
- Amenity grass
- Hedge
- Football pitch
- Play area
- Steps
- Hard surface



98m

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## 1.2 Year 1 Action Plan 2024 – 2025

Ref no.	Action	Obj. ref.	When	Lead	Delivery	Funding	Spec. Ref.
1.1	Remove laurel regeneration at northern boundary, retaining all larger bushes for natural play.	E2	Winter	SADC	Vols / Contract	Internal Resource	2.5
1.2	Remove hedge-supporting fencing by swing and at entrances where they are no longer of use.		Summer	SADC	Contract	GM Budget	2.6
1.3	Remove old noticeboards at entrances.	G1	Summer	SADC	Contract	GM Budget	2.7
1.4	Crown lift and thinning near pedestrian entrance off Folly Lane.	E4	Winter	CMS	Contract	Internal Resource	2.8
1.5	Complete formal tree risk inspection.	B1	Summer	SADC	Contract	GM Budget	
1.6	Conservation cut and lift of long grass.	E1	July & Oct	SADC	JoC	GM Budget	2.2
1.7	Creation of a 'wild patch' adjacent to the felled oak on the Folly Lane side of the playing field.		Autumn	SADC	Vols		

**Abbreviations:** CMS – Countryside Management Service, GM – Grounds Maintenance, SADC – St Albans City and District Council, JoC – John O'Connor Grounds Maintenance Contractors, Vols – Volunteers / Friends of Victoria Playing Field

**Task Responsibility**

- |            |                        |
|------------|------------------------|
| □ SADC led | } Contractor delivered |
| □ CMS led  |                        |
| □ SADC led | } Volunteer delivered  |
| □ CMS led  |                        |

1.5 Complete formal tree □  
risk assessment of all trees onsite

1.6 Conservation cut and lift  
of meadow areas □

1.7 Wild Patch Creation □

1.1 Removal of laurel  
regeneration □ □

1.2 Remove fencing □

1.4 Crown lift  
and thinning □

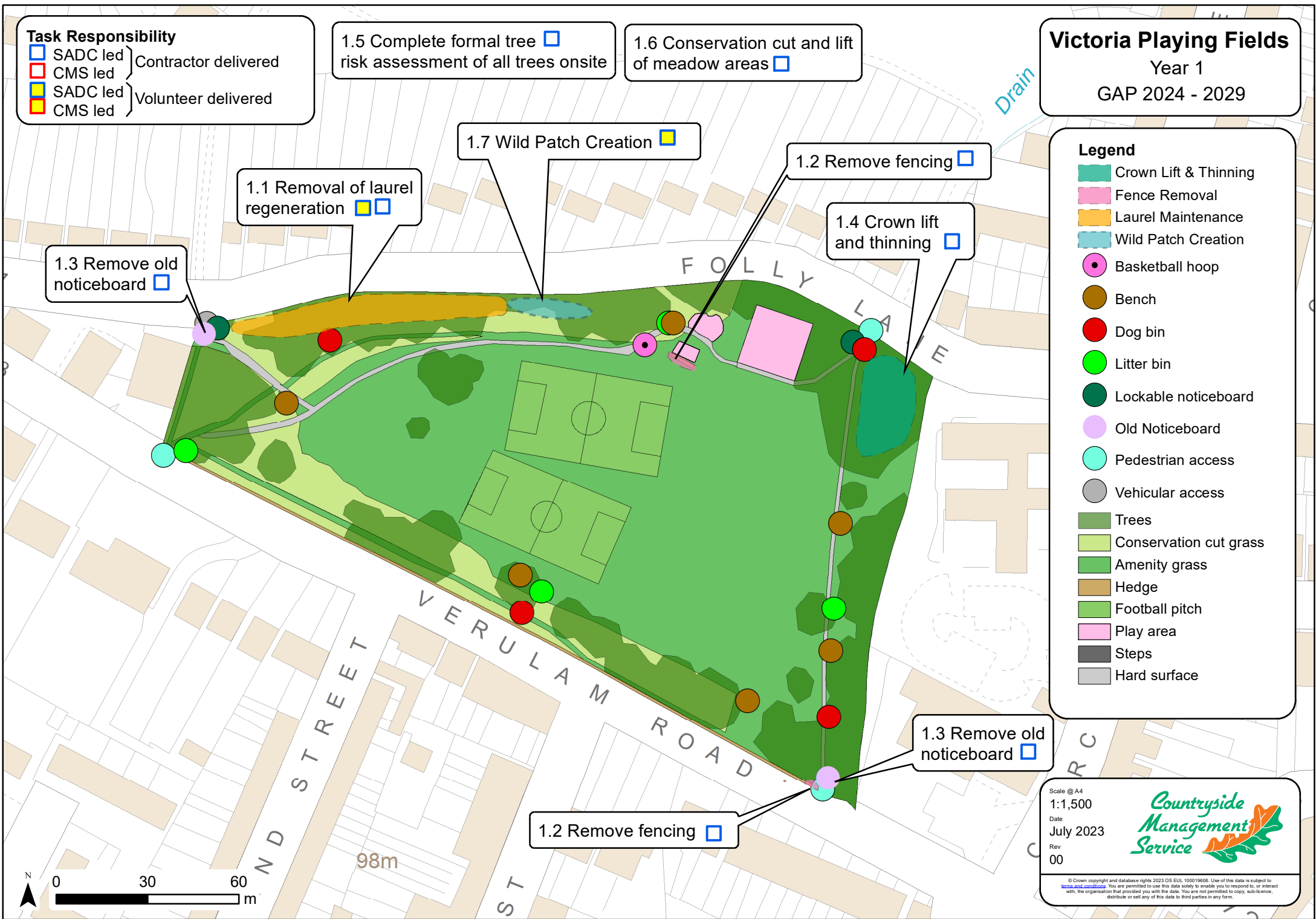
1.3 Remove old  
noticeboard □

**Victoria Playing Fields**

Year 1  
GAP 2024 - 2029

**Legend**

- Crown Lift & Thinning
- Fence Removal
- Laurel Maintenance
- Wild Patch Creation
- Basketball hoop
- Bench
- Dog bin
- Litter bin
- Lockable noticeboard
- Old Noticeboard
- Pedestrian access
- Vehicular access
- Trees
- Conservation cut grass
- Amenity grass
- Hedge
- Football pitch
- Play area
- Steps
- Hard surface



1.3 Remove old  
noticeboard □

1.2 Remove fencing □

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### 1.3 Year 2 Action Plan 2025 – 2029

Ref no.	Action	Obj. ref.	When	Lead	Delivery	Funding	Spec. Ref.
2.1	Gap fill hedges along eastern border.		Winter	SADC / CMS	Vols	Internal Resource	2.9
2.2	Hedge planting along play area fence.		Winter	SADC / CMS	Contract / Vols	Internal Resource	2.10
2.3	Explore possible funding opportunities for new interpretation boards and refurbishment of lockable boards.	G1	Summer	SADC / CMS	SADC / CMS	Internal Resource	
2.4	Explore links with local community such as schools.		Summer	SADC / CMS	SADC / CMS	Internal Resource	

**Abbreviations:** CMS – Countryside Management Service, GM – Grounds Maintenance, SADC – St Albans City and District Council, JoC – John O’Connor Grounds Maintenance Contractors, Vols – Volunteers / Friends of Victoria Playing Field



# Victoria Playing Fields

Year 2  
GAP 2024 - 2029

## Task Responsibility

- |   |   |                      |
|---|---|----------------------|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><span style="border: 1px solid blue; display: inline-block; width: 10px; height: 10px; margin-right: 5px;"></span> SADC led</li> <li><span style="border: 1px solid red; display: inline-block; width: 10px; height: 10px; margin-right: 5px;"></span> CMS led</li> </ul>      | } | Contractor delivered |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><span style="background-color: yellow; display: inline-block; width: 10px; height: 10px; margin-right: 5px;"></span> SADC led</li> <li><span style="background-color: orange; display: inline-block; width: 10px; height: 10px; margin-right: 5px;"></span> CMS led</li> </ul> | } | Volunteer delivered  |

2.3 Explore funding for new interpretation boards & refurbishment of existing lockable boards

2.4 Explore links with local community

2.2 Hedge planting

Drain

## Legend

- Hedge Planting
- Basketball hoop
- Bench
- Dog bin
- Litter bin
- Lockable noticeboard
- Pedestrian access
- Vehicular access
- Trees
- Conservation cut grass
- Amenity grass
- Hedge
- Football pitch
- Play area
- Steps
- Hard surface

2.1 Gap fill hedges



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### 1.4 Year 3 Action Plan 2026 – 2027

Ref no.	Action	Obj. ref.	When	Lead	Delivery	Funding	Spec. Ref.
3.1	Weed control of hedges planted in Year 2.		Ongoing	SADC	Vols	Internal Resource	2.9 / 2.10
3.2	Replace any losses of hedges planted in Year 2.		Ongoing	SADC	Vols	Internal Resource	2.9 / 2.10
3.3	If funding found, design and install new interpretation boards at the entrances from Folly Lane and Verulam Road. Refurbish lockable boards at entrances off Folly Lane.	G1	Summer	SADC / CMS	SADC / CMS	External Resource	2.11

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# Victoria Playing Fields

Year 3  
GAP 2024 - 2029

**Task Responsibility**

□ SADC led	} Contractor delivered
□ CMS led	
□ SADC led	} Volunteer delivered
□ CMS led	

3.1 Weed control of hedges planted in Year 2 ■

3.2 Replace any losses of hedges planted in Year 2 ■

3.3 Refurbishment of existing lockable noticeboard (subject to external funding allocation) □ □

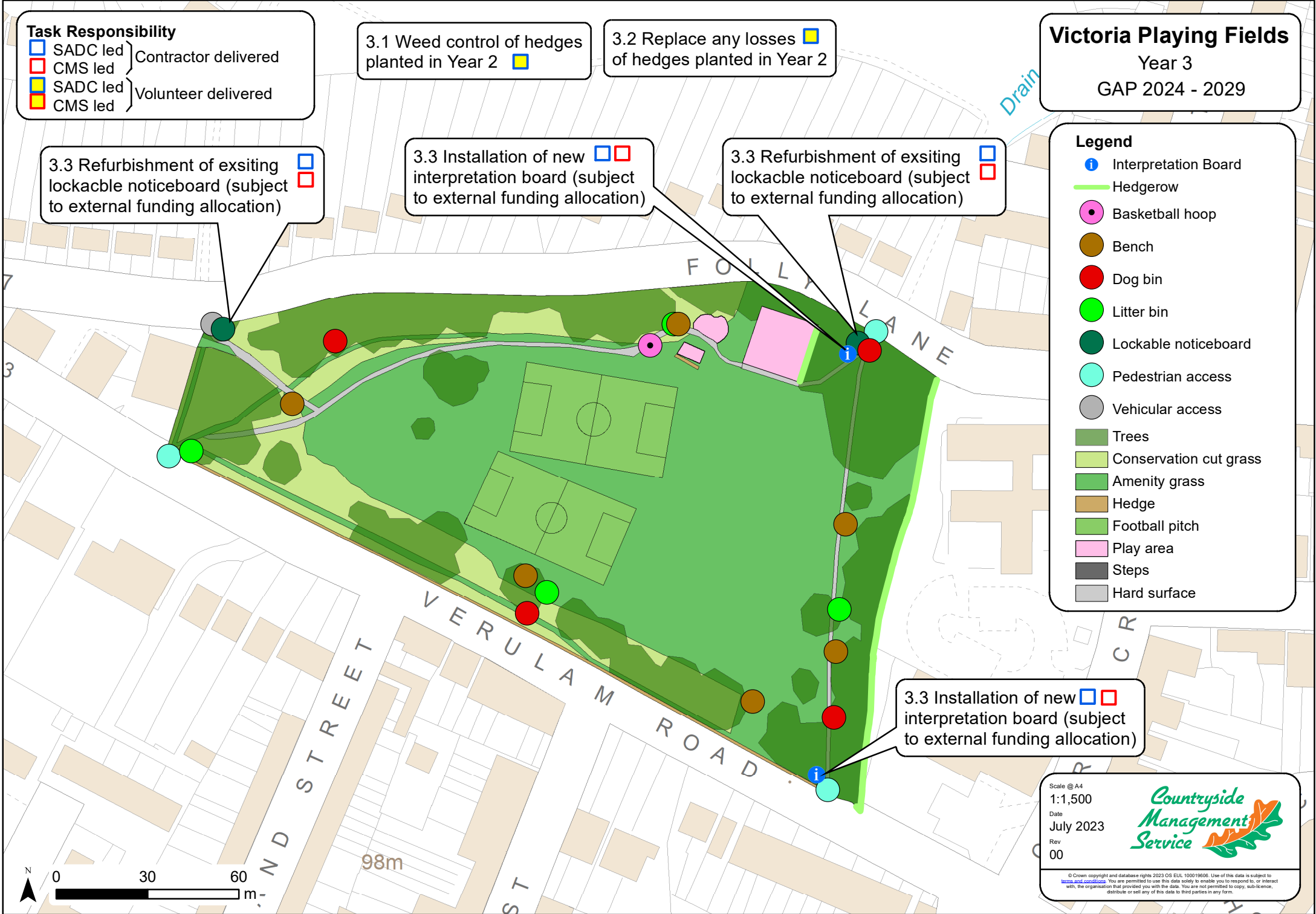
3.3 Installation of new interpretation board (subject to external funding allocation) □ □

3.3 Refurbishment of existing lockable noticeboard (subject to external funding allocation) □ □

3.3 Installation of new interpretation board (subject to external funding allocation) □ □

**Legend**

- i Interpretation Board
- Hedgerow
- Basketball hoop
- Bench
- Dog bin
- Litter bin
- Lockable noticeboard
- Pedestrian access
- Vehicular access
- Trees
- Conservation cut grass
- Amenity grass
- Hedge
- Football pitch
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### 1.5 Year 4 Action Plan 2027 – 2028

Ref no.	Action	Obj. ref.	When	Lead	Delivery	Funding	Spec. Ref.
4.1	Complete formal tree risk inspection.	B1	Summer	SADC	Contract	GM Budget	
4.2	Weed control of hedges planted in Year 2.		Ongoing	SADC	Vols	Internal Resource	2.9 / 2.10
4.3	Replace any losses of hedges planted in Year 2.		Ongoing	SADC	Vols	Internal Resource	2.9 / 2.10
4.4	Removal of the willow picket fence around the weeping willow tree.		Summer	SADC	Vols		

**Abbreviations:** CMS – Countryside Management Service, GM – Grounds Maintenance, SADC – St Albans City and District Council, JoC – John O’Connor Grounds Maintenance Contractors, Vols – Volunteers / Friends of Victoria Playing Field

**Task Responsibility**

- SADC led
  - CMS led
  - SADC led
  - CMS led
- Contractor delivered
- Volunteer delivered

4.2 Weed control of hedges planted in Year 2  

4.3 Replace any losses of hedges planted in Year 2  

4.1 Formal tree risk assessment of all trees on site  

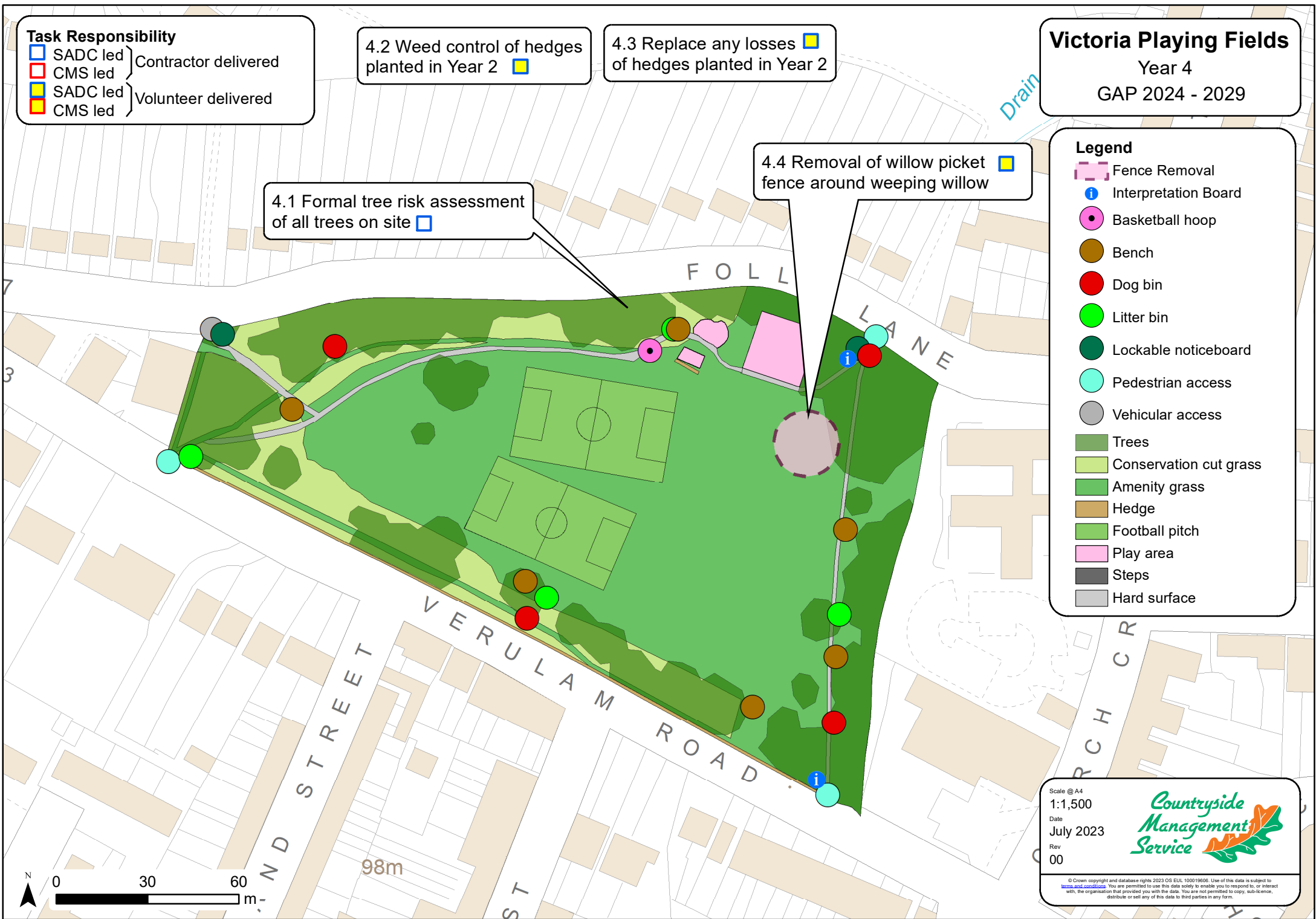
4.4 Removal of willow picket fence around weeping willow  

**Victoria Playing Fields**

Year 4  
GAP 2024 - 2029

**Legend**

- Fence Removal
- Interpretation Board
- Basketball hoop
- Bench
- Dog bin
- Litter bin
- Lockable noticeboard
- Pedestrian access
- Vehicular access
- Trees
- Conservation cut grass
- Amenity grass
- Hedge
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**1.6 Year 5 Action Plan 2028 – 2029**

Ref no.	Action	Obj. ref.	When	Lead	Delivery	Funding	Spec. Ref.
5.1	Remove guards from hedges planted in Year 2.		Spring	SADC	Vols	Internal Resource	2.9 / 2.10
5.2	Weed control of hedges planted in Year 2.		Ongoing	SADC	Vols	Internal Resource	2.9 / 2.10
5.3	Replace any losses of hedges planted in Year 2.		Ongoing	SADC	Vols	Internal Resource	2.9 / 2.10

**Abbreviations:** CMS – Countryside Management Service, GM – Grounds Maintenance, SADC – St Albans City and District Council, JoC – John O’Connor Grounds Maintenance Contractors, Vols – Volunteers / Friends of Victoria Playing Field

**Task Responsibility**

- |   |   |                      |
|---|---|----------------------|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><span style="color: blue;">■</span> SADC led</li> <li><span style="color: red;">■</span> CMS led</li> </ul>      | } | Contractor delivered |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><span style="color: yellow;">■</span> SADC led</li> <li><span style="color: orange;">■</span> CMS led</li> </ul> |   | Volunteer delivered  |

5.2 Weed control of hedges planted in Year 2 ■

5.3 Replace any losses of hedges planted in Year 2 ■

5.1 Remove guards from hedges planted in Year 2 ■

5.1 Remove guards from hedges planted in Year 2 ■

**Victoria Playing Fields**

Year 5  
GAP 2024 - 2029

**Legend**

- i Interpretation Board
- Hedgerow
- Basketball hoop
- Bench
- Dog bin
- Litter bin
- Lockable noticeboard
- Pedestrian access
- Vehicular access
- Trees
- Conservation cut grass
- Amenity grass
- Hedge
- Football pitch
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## 2. SPECIFICATIONS

<b>2.1</b> General prescriptions relevant to all operations	
<b>Visitor Safety</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Members of the public to be kept a safe distance from any major works that may be undertaken.</li> <li>• Access routes may require temporary closure.</li> </ul>
<b>Timing</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Unless otherwise stated, all habitat management work will be undertaken between 1<sup>st</sup> November and 28<sup>th</sup> February.</li> </ul>

<b>2.2</b> May cut of summer meadow	
<b>Purpose</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To reduce nettles outcompeting wildflowers in the summer meadows, improving the biodiversity and visual aesthetic of the meadow areas.</li> </ul>
<b>Method</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The meadow areas should be cut once in July and once in October wherever possible, this should replace the current cutting regime.</li> <li>• The grass should be cut using a tractor and topper (or pedestrian tractor and Allen scythe for harder to access areas) to a sward height of 40-60mm. Using machinery such as flails should be avoided as this obliterates the grass. Volunteer groups may cut grassy areas using a scythe or heavy-duty strimmer.</li> <li>• The cut grass should be left for a period of 4 – 7 days to allow drying and seed dispersal.</li> <li>• The arisings should then be lined using a tractor and tedder, collected with a baler, and then removed from site. Smaller versions of these implements may be mounted on a pedestrian tractor or volunteer parties may rake up the arisings and pitch them into a trailer.</li> <li>• Due to the likely presence of contaminants (dog muck) the bales should be disposed of as green waste.</li> </ul>
<b>Who</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SADC to lead, work to be carried out by grounds maintenance team.</li> </ul>

**Photos**



**Future Management**

- Continued conservation grassland management.

**2.3 Assessment to Control Invasive Species**

**Purpose**

- Improve the quality of the habitats present on site by identifying and removing any invasive species.

**Method**

- Walks to be completed around all areas of the park, looking to identify any invasive species.
- Once identified, reported to SADC / CMS to decide upon next steps.




	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If suitable for hand pulling / removal, this is to be completed by volunteer work party.</li> <li>• If not suitable for hand removal, contractor to be procured.</li> </ul>
<b>Who</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• FoG</li> </ul>
<b>Future Management</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continued monitoring of invasive species.</li> </ul>

<b>2.4 Maintain entrances off Folly Lane and Verulam Road</b>	
<b>Purpose</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To allow people to continue to utilise the site, in particular using the historic entrances off Verulam Road.</li> </ul>
<b>Method</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintain the two informal access points in the hedge adjacent to Hill Street and Portland Street.</li> <li>• Remove any temporary fencing and prune the hedge to leave a gap 1m wide in each location.</li> <li>• Maintain the main entrance off Folly Lane by cutting back any encroaching vegetation.</li> </ul>
<b>Who</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CMS / SADC to lead, work to be carried out by FoG / Vols.</li> </ul>
<b>Future Management</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue to monitor encroachment.</li> </ul>

<b>2.5 Maintain Laurel</b>	
<b>Purpose</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If left uncontrolled, laurel will establish quickly and dominate all other vegetation, reducing establishment of target species and biodiversity at the site.</li> </ul>
<b>Method</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Regular monitoring of laurel encroachment to be carried out by the FoG during their work parties on the site.</li> <li>• Regular small scale hand control may be effectively employed. This will involve pulling up any seedlings that come up and digging out any plants manually. Ensure all roots are removed.</li> <li>• If laurel spread becomes out of the scope of small-scale hand control, a work party should be organised to do larger-scale laurel removal.</li> <li>• A contractor should then be procured to carry out stump treatment.</li> <li>• Retain some mature laurel for use in natural play.</li> </ul>
<b>Who</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CMS / SADC to lead, work to be carried out by FoG / Vols / Contractor (if needed).</li> </ul>

<b>Style / Design</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If contractor procured for stump treatment, contractor must have appropriate Certificate of Competence.</li> <li>• Stumps should be treated with a foliar spray mixed with an adjuvant between May – October.</li> <li>• During stump treatment, all operatives on site must wear adequate PPE and adhere to all H&amp;S requirements.</li> <li>• Stump treatment should use selective herbicides in preference to non-selective ones to avoid destroying non-target species.</li> </ul>
<b>Future Management</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continued monitoring of encroachment.</li> </ul>

<b>2.6 Remove fencing</b>	
<b>Purpose</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fencing by the swing and at entrances was put in to help hedges establish and is now redundant. Removal will improve the visual aesthetic of the site.</li> </ul>
<b>Method</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Removal of any temporary fencing, ensuring minimal damage to the hedgerows they were erected to protect.</li> <li>• Disposal of fencing in accordance with waste disposal regulations.</li> </ul>
<b>Who</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SADC to lead, work to be carried out by contractor.</li> </ul>
<b>Photos</b>	





**Future Management**

- Monitor the hedges next to the fences.

**2.7 Remove old noticeboards**

**Purpose**

- To improve visual appearance of entrances.

**Method**

- Remove and dispose of noticeboards.
- Fill in any holes left behind by legs of the noticeboard.


**Who**

- SADC to lead, work to be carried out by a contractor.

**Photos**



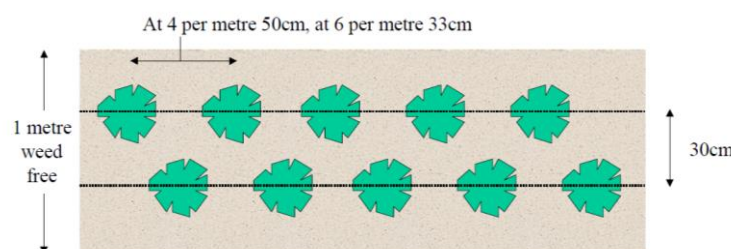
	
<b>Future Management</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Investigate funding opportunities for future replacement of interpretation boards.</li> </ul>


<b>2.8</b> Crown lift and thinning near entrance off Folly Lane	
<b>Purpose</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To enhance the appeal of this area of the park and encourage light to the ground to allow flora to grow.</li> </ul>
<b>Method</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wherever possible the number and size of wounds should be limited and well-spaced to reduce the chance of decay pockets combining to form larger cavities.</li> <li>• To avoid lack of balance after crown lifting, the remaining crown should be at least 2/3 of the total height of the tree.</li> <li>• Where possible, prioritisation should be on the reduction of branches to lateral/secondary growth leaving a flowing branch line rather than their complete removal.</li> <li>• Crown lifting should be completed to a minimum clearance height of 2.4m over kerb height in areas over footpaths/paved areas.</li> </ul> <div style="text-align: center;">  </div>



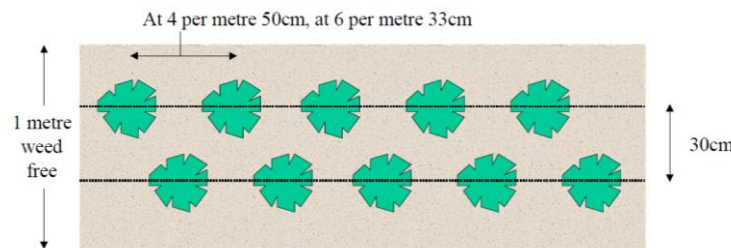
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Fell / reduce weaker specimens to increase structural variety and encourage understory development.</li> <li>Timber should be used as dead hedging along the boundary of the site, to create a deadwood habitat.</li> </ul>
<b>Who</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>CMS / SADC to procure, work to be carried out by contractor.</li> </ul>
<b>Style / Design</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Crown lift should be completed with consideration of the fact that excessive removal of low branches can lead to the development of poor trunk/crown balance, where a tree may become top heavy. Contractor should take care when removing branches to ensure a well-balanced approach.</li> <li>Members of the public to be kept a safe distance from any major works that may be undertaken.</li> <li>Access routes may require temporary closure.</li> <li>Work to be undertaken between 1<sup>st</sup> November and 28<sup>th</sup> February.</li> <li>Thin to maximum 20% canopy removal within management area, targeting trees with poor form for felling.</li> </ul>
<b>Future Management</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continued monitoring of crown density and ground flora.</li> </ul>

## 2.9 Gap fill hedges


<b>Purpose</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To improve the visual appearance of the site border, as well as promoting biodiversity and habitats.</li> </ul>
<b>Method</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To aid establishment the site should be prepared prior to planting. Plough, rotovate or dig a strip 60cm wide by 30cm deep and create a weed free strip around 1m wide, either by cultivation or herbicide.</li> <li>Bare root transplants of 30cm to 60cm should be used, of a species mix which matches surrounding hedges.</li> </ul> <p>Planting Layout</p>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The above drawing shows the planting layout for the hawthorn species. To this, a small proportion of other shrubs indicative of the local area should be included. Ensure to</li> </ul>

	<p>avoid regular spacing as this can create a striped unnatural effect.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Plant out as soon as possible after obtaining the plants. All roots should be protected while exposed to prevent drying out or frost damage.</li> <li>• Plant during the winter, or ideally late autumn or early spring to avoid heavy frosts, but while the soil is moist.</li> <li>• If the ground is very soft or has been cultivated then slot planting may be an option, otherwise pit planting is better.</li> <li>• Wild animals, such as rabbits, voles, or deer, can decimate a newly planted hedge so protection of new plants is essential. Individual guards are generally the easiest way, though fencing may be an option.</li> </ul>
<b>Who</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CMS / SADC to lead, work to be carried out by FoG / Vols.</li> </ul>
<b>Style / Design</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The species mix should provide colour and interest for visitors, support a diverse range of wildlife, and ensure ease of maintenance for grounds maintenance staff.</li> <li>• Use 50% common hawthorn (<i>Crataegus monogyna</i>) and a mixture of other native species such as field maple (<i>Acer campestre</i>), hazel (<i>Corylus avellana</i>), dog rose (<i>Rosa canina</i>), dogwood (<i>Cornus sanguinea</i>), spindle (<i>Euonymus europaea</i>), buckthorn (<i>Rhamnus cathartica</i>), alder buckthorn (<i>Frangula alnus</i>), guelder rose (<i>Viburnum opulus</i>) and wayfaring tree (<i>Viburnum lantana</i>).</li> </ul> 
<b>Future Management</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Remove guards in 3 to 5 years</li> <li>• Weed control such as cutting, hoeing, mulch mats, or organic mulch.</li> <li>• Replace any losses.</li> </ul>

## 2.10 Hedge planting around play area

<p><b>Purpose</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To improve the visual appearance of the area around the play area, as well as boosting biodiversity and habitats.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Method</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To aid establishment the site should be prepared prior to planting. Plough, rotovate or dig a strip 60cm wide by 30cm deep and create a weed free strip around 1m wide, either by cultivation or herbicide.</li> <li>Bare root transplants of 30cm to 60cm should be used, of a species mix which matches surrounding hedges.</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: center;">Planting Layout</p>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The above drawing shows the planting layout for the hawthorn species. To this, a small proportion of other shrubs indicative of the local area should be included. Ensure to avoid regular spacing as this can create a striped unnatural effect.</li> <li>Plant out as soon as possible after obtaining the plants. All roots should be protected while exposed to prevent drying out or frost damage.</li> <li>Plant during the winter, or ideally late autumn or early spring to avoid heavy frosts, but while the soil is moist.</li> <li>If the ground is very soft or has been cultivated then slot planting may be an option, otherwise pit planting is better.</li> <li>Wild animals, such as rabbits, voles, or deer, can decimate a newly planted hedge so protection of new plants is essential. Individual guards are generally the easiest way, though fencing may be an option.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Who</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>CMS / SADC to lead, work to be carried out by FoG / vols.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Style / Design</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The species mix should provide colour and interest for visitors, support a diverse range of wildlife, and ensure ease of maintenance for grounds maintenance staff.</li> <li>Use 50% common hawthorn (<i>Crataegus monogyna</i>) and a mixture of other native species such as field maple (<i>Acer campestre</i>), hazel (<i>Corylus avellana</i>), dog rose (<i>Rosa canina</i>), dogwood (<i>Cornus sanguinea</i>), spindle (<i>Euonymus europaea</i>), buckthorn (<i>Rhamnus cathartica</i>), alder buckthorn</li> </ul>



	<p>(<i>Frangula alnus</i>), guelder rose (<i>Viburnum opulus</i>) and wayfaring tree (<i>Viburnum lantana</i>).</p> 
<b>Future Management</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Remove guards in 3 to 5 years</li> <li>• Weed control such as cutting, hoeing, mulch mats, or organic mulch.</li> <li>• Replace any losses.</li> </ul>

<b>2.11</b> Replace old noticeboards	
<b>Purpose</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To improve visual appearance of entrances and give visitors information about the history of the site, as well as the flora and fauna present.</li> </ul>
<b>Method</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Design and produce an A2 interpretation board which provides orientation for visitors and information on the history and wildlife of the playing field and provide PDF version of the same.</li> <li>• Design to be based around a watercolour composition and photographs, and to follow the SADC house style.</li> <li>• Provide two proof stages of full colour design in hard copy and PDF format.</li> <li>• Supply an upright frame in green powder coated stainless steel, twin leg, incorporating a GRP panel.</li> <li>• Quantity: 2</li> <li>• Deliver to CMS for installation by volunteers.</li> </ul>
<b>Who</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CMS to procure, contractor to deliver, installation by FoG / vols.</li> </ul>



**Photos**

**Welcome to historic Verulamium Park, set in over 100 acres of beautiful parkland and special for its heritage and wildlife.**

**Discover 2000 years of history...**  
 Beneath the grass, medieval and classical ruins of the Roman city of Verulamium lie hidden. The oldest dated structure is a fascinating iron dating back two millennia. In the park you will discover the remains of the Roman city wall, the Roman forum and a well preserved mosaic with typical Roman floor designs. You can also see the remains of a high town house. Pay a visit to Verulamium Museum to find out more about the Roman city and the incredible discoveries that archaeologists have made over the years.

**...be at one with nature...**  
 meandering through the tranquil parkland, Verulamium Park is a haven for nature. To enjoy the beauty and tranquillity of the park, follow the 'Nature Trail' to discover the park's history and the diverse wildlife that lives here. You will see a variety of magnificent grey herons. Learn about the park's history and the incredible discoveries that archaeologists have made over the years.

**...and above all, have fun!**  
 Verulamium Park is the perfect place for you and your family. Children will love our splash park and play areas, and the park is also a great place to enjoy a picnic. The park is also a great place to enjoy a picnic. The park is also a great place to enjoy a picnic.

**Key**  
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**We hope you enjoy your visit to Verulamium Park**

**Welcome to Nomansland Common**

**History of the Common**  
 People have used Nomansland Common for thousands of years and the first records found on the Common have been dated to 4,000BC.

**What is common land?**  
 Common land or wastes in a parish, were often uncultivated and of little agricultural value, but were owned by the local Lord. In times gone by villagers or 'commoners' relied on commons for their livelihoods.

**Why Nomansland?**  
 Nomansland Common lies across two parishes, Sandridge and Wheathampstead. During the 19th Century the parishes of St Albans and Wheathampstead both claimed the Common as their respective parish.

**Key**  
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**Future Management**

- Monitor appearance of furniture to ensure in good quality.

### 3. APPENDIX 1 – SUMMARY OF RESPONSES (FRIENDS OF VICTORIA PLAYING FIELD)

Name	Organisation	Summary of Responses	Action
Barry Cropper	(On behalf of) Friends of Victoria Playing Field	Would like action to look at funding for marking out the basketball hard surface.	Action considered however is very costly with no budget available.
		Wanted to add that the Field's Asset of Community Value status was renewed in 2020 and now runs until 2025 (update to text in main GAP)	Noted.
		Wanted to add that the future of Larks in the Parks is uncertain as the Council were unable to fund it in 2023 (update to text in main GAP)	Noted.
		Wanted to update that Section 2.8.1 of main GAP no longer reflect the site as they have a hard path that runs between the play area and the Folly Lane entrance.	Noted and shown in maps in extension GAP.
		Wanted to update that Section 2.9.1 of the main GAP no longer reflected the demographics of the site and are outdated.	Noted.
		Wanted to update that the reference to the Royal British Legion in Section 2.9.3 of the main GAP is outdated.	Noted.
		Wanted to update that most of the elements mentioned in Section 3.1 of the main GAP have now been completed.	Noted.
		Wanted to update that the summer meadows mentioned in Section 3.5 of the main GAP have been completed although said it is questionable how successful this was.	Noted and change in cutting regime outlined in this plan may help.
		Discussion in regard to display of statutory notices if there is removal of the old noticeboards. Suggested either not displaying the statutory notices or refurbishing the old noticeboards with a rub down and some paint.	The old boards are beyond a refurb and need to come out.

		Discussion in regard to replacing the locks and/or refurbishing the lockable noticeboards to prevent water penetration.	Item noted and agreed that they need a refurb, however no current budget to complete this. Can add into investigation of funding alongside the new interpretation boards.
		Concern regarding the financial pressures on the Council and whether the GM will be adequate to carry out all the Annual Actions listed.	No concern from SADC regarding this.
		Request to add in creating a 'wild patch' in the area adjacent to the felled oak on the Folly Lane side of the Playing Field (agreed in principle with SADC) in Year 1 of the Action Plan.	Added to plan.
		Request to add in a review of the football goalposts looking at refurbishment or replacement in Year 3 due to rust.	Action noted, however unable to be completed in this plan.
		Request to add in removal of the willow picket fence around the weeping willow tree in Year 4, with review for possible replacement.	Added to plan.