

The Firs Greenspace Actopn Plan (GAP) 2017 - 2022

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SITE SUMMARY

Name	The Firs
Address	Scott Road Bishop's Stortford CM23 3QP
Grid ref	TL548304 220700
Size	1.32 ha (3.11 acre)
Owner	East Herts Council

Vision Statement

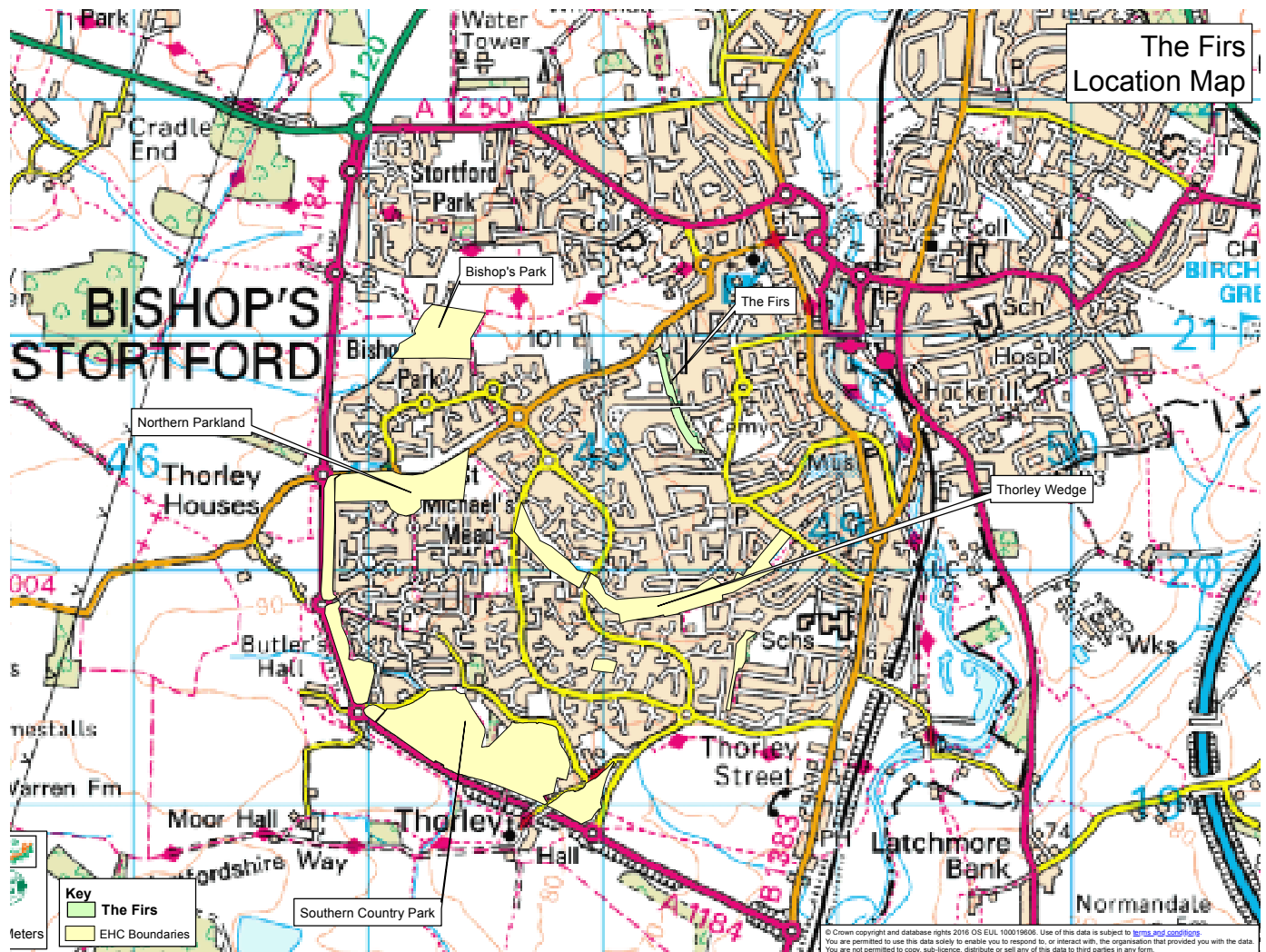
For The Firs to be a well-used green space in Bishop's Stortford, with historical features and biodiversity retained for the local community to enjoy.

This will be achieved by the following aims:

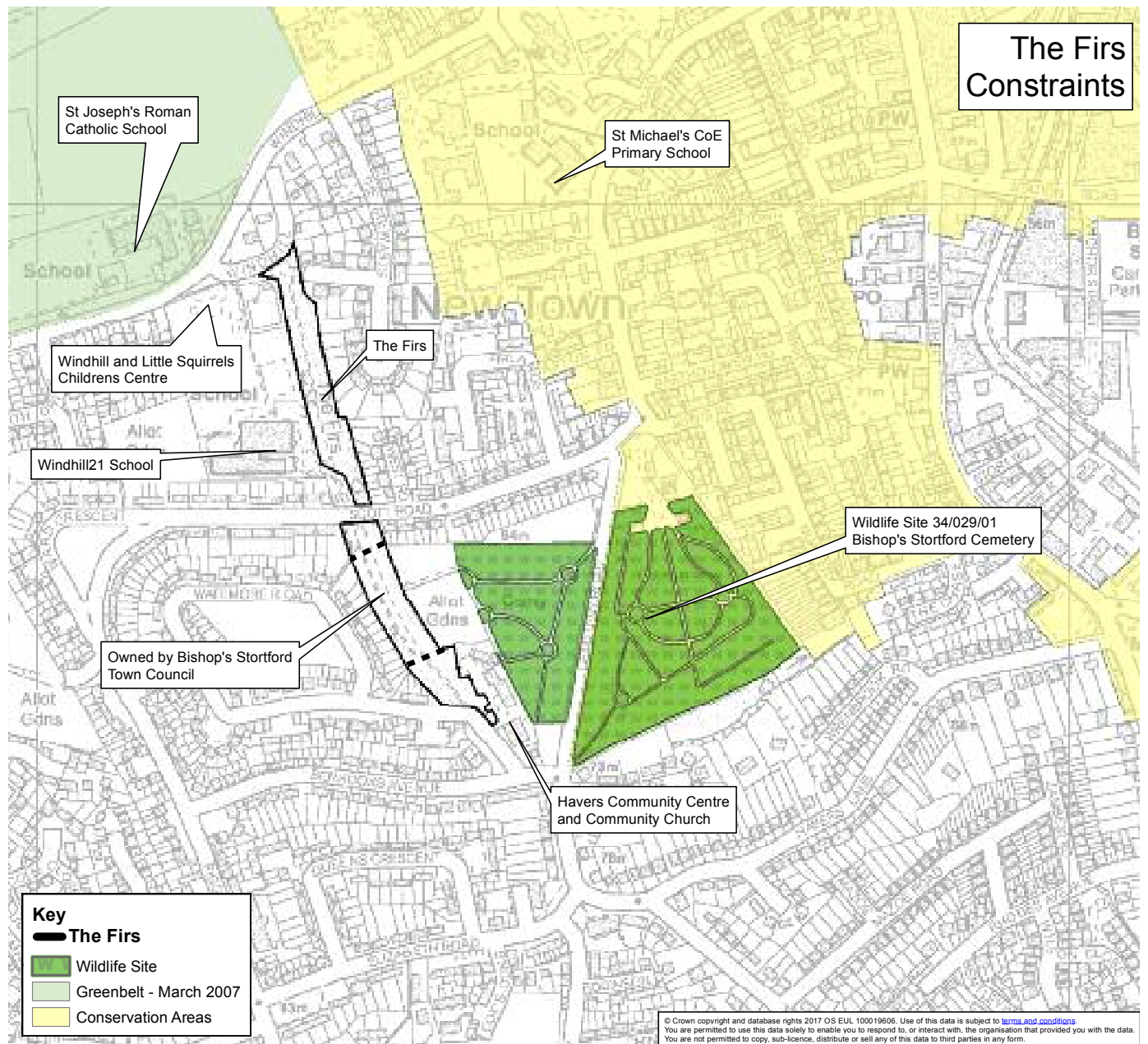
- To promote awareness and interest in The Firs
- To improve the visitor experience and enhance opportunities for informing and educating
- To conserve and enhance the on-site historical features (avenue of trees) for visitor enjoyment
- To protect and enhance the biodiversity that can be found in The Firs
- To undertake proactive, rotational vegetation management to benefit people and wildlife
- To formally recognise and support volunteer activity at The Firs and to ensure all involved operate towards achievement of the GAP
- To secure external funding to ensure the viability of capital works
- To ensure ongoing maintenance costs are financially sustainable

Site Description

Location Map



Constraints Map



Site Description Map



Introduction

The Firs is a broad woodland pathway lined with lime, pink chestnut and fir trees. The 1.32 hectare (3.11 acre) linear strip is a popular route to the local college, schools and into Bishop's Stortford. Most of the site is owned and managed by East Herts Council (herein referred to as the Council) with a small part behind the cemetery being owned and managed by Bishop's Stortford Town Council (BSTC).

Review of Progress

The existing 'Southern Country Park and Beyond' project has helped to guide the Council's management of The Firs as one of the open spaces which links up to create a new non-motorised walking route. This plan included improvements to access, interpretation and the inclusion of The Firs as one of the five parks on the Parks and Beyond circular walk routes. Each of the five open spaces has an interpretation panel installed with map of the route and information about the site. Current management operations at The Firs include: grass cutting, management and maintenance of the path surface and signage, small scale vegetation management, litter picking, fly tip removal and reactive tree works to address safety issues.

The new GAP will look to further develop the habitats and biodiversity of the site while retaining its historic value.

Local Residents have been instrumental in conserving and raising the profile of this interesting and well used open space. Their commitment and offer of voluntary support over recent years has prompted the Council to define works for the future and to formally acknowledge this valuable community interest. The considerable work already undertaken in partnership with residents and the voluntary activity on site has already had a positive effect on reducing anti-social behaviour. Works have included the establishment of new trees and adapting maintenance regimes to enhance wildlife habitats.

Landscape & History

The Firs is a broad woodland pathway lined with lime, pink chestnut and fir trees. It was planted in the early 1900s, and was intended to be a private, tree-lined avenue leading from Great Hadham Road to a large mansion which Sir Walter Gilbey planned to build at the Cox's Farm, at the top of Havers Lane. Three avenues were planted – The Firs, Thorley Hill (Acacias) and Thorley Park Avenue through to 52 Thorley Lane (Pink Chestnuts and Limes), with a lodge house and large gates at the start of each. These were all built (the lodges housed Sir Walter's servants) but only the lodge at 52 Thorley Lane survives. The beginning of the 1st World War prevented work on the mansion starting: Sir Walter died in November 1914, after which his plans were abandoned. The Firs is the only avenue to survive in its original form, the rest being removed to make way for housing.

Habitats & Wildlife

Trees and scrub

The avenue of lime, pink chestnut and fir trees are the main feature of The Firs. The central avenue is made up of lime and pink chestnut trees; parallel to this (on both sides) is a row of fir trees planted in the gaps. Most of the trees on site are mature and new trees have been planted where gaps have arisen.

The fir trees along the edge of the site are interspersed with small numbers of larch and silver birch; these are all amongst a mix of tall vegetation and scrub including holly. The main hedgerow boundaries contain elm, hawthorn, blackthorn and guelder rose. Some additional trees and scrub have been planted up in the margins. Snowdrop, crocus and bluebell bulbs have been planted under the trees along the avenue to give a burst of colour in the spring.

At the northern end of the site by Windhill and Scott Road there are flower bed areas which have been planted up with non-native species.

Grassland

The grass along the avenue is amenity cut, while the longer vegetation along the edges is cut annually as conservation cut.

Ditch

A small ditch runs along part of the eastern side of the site. It frequently dries out but the vegetation of pendulous sedge and willowherb shows that it holds some amount of water for a majority of the year. There are two culverted nine inch inlet pipes; water is believed to come from somewhere in the vicinity of the school on the Great Hadham Road, with reports of flooding on site before it disappears underground near West Road. The pipe to the ditch is owned and managed by Thames Water while the ditch is maintained the Council.

Access, Infrastructure & Facilities

Access & Circulation

All paths across the site are tarmacked.

Site Entrances

Pedestrian Entrances

There are several pedestrian access points onto The Firs. Access is from Waytemore Road, Scott Road and Windhill, with additional footpaths from residential areas from The Stewarts and a footpath through to Waytemore Road. There is a pedestrian gate into Bishop's Stortford Cemetery which is locked and unlocked daily.

Vehicular Entrances

There is access for maintenance vehicles via lockable bollards off Waytemore Road and Scott Road.

Structures & Park Furniture

Signage

Discrete 'welcome' signage is installed at the four main entrances to the site Windhill, Scott Road (one on either side of the road) and Waytemore Road, giving the name of the park and emergency contact information. There is an interpretation panel just to the north of Scott Road providing information about the site and a map showing the location of the park on the 'Parks and Beyond' circular walks. A leaflet of the circular routes which includes The Firs has been distributed to houses along the route, local council and town council offices, libraries and tourist information office.

Dog waste bins, litter bins & fly tipping

There are five dog waste bins and six litter bins spread out along the length of the site. They are emptied as required by the Council's grounds maintenance contractors, who are also required to remove litter and fly tipping from the site.

Attractions

The Firs is a short walk away from the centre of Bishop's Stortford. Bishop's Stortford College and local schools are all in close proximity to the site.

Management

The Council owns and manages most of The Firs. The section adjacent to the cemetery is owned and managed by Bishop's Stortford Town Council (BSTC). The Council are committed to working with BSTC to make the management of this site a success.

The maintenance works on the Council's owned parts of the site are currently carried out by John O'Connor's (JOC) ground maintenance contractors.

Five year Greenspace Action Plans (GAPs) for the site are produced by the Countryside Management Service in consultation with the relevant partners and stakeholders, this is the first individual plan for the site.

Community Involvement & Events

A small group of volunteers, some of whom are part of Friends of Southern Country Park, run ad-hoc practical conservation tasks through the winter months. Volunteers have also been involved in installing the waymarking for the circular routes, entrance signs and interpretation panel on site.

Analysis and Evaluation

A Welcoming Place

The access through The Firs is along a flat tarmacked path that runs along the length of the site. As part of the Parks and Beyond Project entrance signs were installed at the four main entrances, along with an interpretation panel giving the site a welcoming feel.

Healthy, Safe & Secure

The safety of users is of primary importance to the Council. Formal tree safety surveys are undertaken annually; any works will be prioritised according to a risk assessment. The path is lit with street lights but works need to be undertaken to clear the tree branches from overhanging the lights and the path.

The Council values its trees across the district including those on its own land. We recognise that actions taken to maintain our trees need to be proportionate to the actual risks involved and the importance of trees in our environment. Our inspection regime is thorough and carried out by specialist arboriculturalists qualified to undertake risk assessments. The trees in The Firs are inspected on an annual basis. Management decisions are taken in light of the wider benefits of trees; aesthetic, ecological, environmental and sociological. We note in our leaflet published to guide residents who enquire about work to protected trees that they; reduce carbon dioxide levels, filter and absorb pollution, absorb noise, produce oxygen, reduce the stress of modern lifestyles, encourage wildlife, have an aesthetic value and offer shade and shelter. We will not fell any trees without sound evidence that the tree is likely to cause damage or injury or where for conservation reasons, its removal will benefit the wider environment. Where possible we will replant any trees which are lost in this respect.

Clean & Well Maintained

The main avenue will continue to be cut as amenity grass and maintained short, the edges will be cut and lifted as a conservation cut once a year after the flowers have seeded. Care needs to be taken to avoid cutting the newly planted trees. Entrance/exit points are to be maintained free from encroaching vegetation. Vegetation should be maintained low around the signs and bins.

The wooden bollards around the site and other structures are to be inspected regularly and any maintenance carried out accordingly. Any new furniture will be long lasting, aesthetically pleasing and kept to a minimum. Infrastructure such as the bollards currently protecting the site from vehicular access will be reviewed periodically and either removed in future years if no longer needed or maintained to a presentable standard. Whilst the Council will always aim to replace such features if they become worn beyond repair, this will always be subject to available funds.

The dog waste bins are visited weekly and litter bins around the site are visited daily as part of the Grounds Maintenance contract. Any replacement bins are to be installed closer to the road and away from the middle of the avenue so as not to spoil the view. The Council will only install litter or dog waste bins where there is evidence of a need. It is not anticipated that additional bins will be required at this site.

Fly tipping occurs occasionally this is currently dealt with as part of the Grounds Maintenance contract. Where there is sufficient evidence the Council will also undertake enforcement action under the Environmental Protection Act 1990.

Sustainability

Slight changes to the grounds maintenance contract will not substantially change the cost to maintain the site i.e. reducing the area currently under amenity cut and increasing the area of conservation cut where the grass is cut and removed annually.

The annual management works will be covered by the Council's grounds maintenance budget. Trained and fully supported Volunteers will play a major role in helping to undertake various practical conservation tasks across The Firs as part of an agreed programme.

Using FSC certified timber for signs and producing products that can be recycled at the end of their life will go towards making the site more sustainable. Ensuring that all material removed from the site is disposed of in the correct manner will also help to meet this goal.

By buying trees from a reputable supplier that are suitable for the site, of the right provenance for the area and UK grown will reduce the risk of bringing in infectious diseases. Where possible natural regeneration is best practice and should be the restocking method of choice (see appendix 6.1).

Conservation

Tree and Scrub

The avenue of limes and pink chestnuts is a historic feature of The Firs and proves a very attractive backdrop in the autumn. The trees need to have the epicormic growth removed, be crown lifted and have any dead wood removed if it is overhanging the path. By replacing trees along the avenue as soon as they show signs of disease or becoming unsafe will help to maintain the appearance of the avenue and provide the next generation of trees. Tree guards need to be maintained and removed once the tree reaches maturity. Some of the smaller scale work is suitable for volunteers.

To help establish the scrubby margins, new species have been planted. It is important that any new species being brought onto the site should be native, from a reputable supplier and where possible be of local provenance (see appendix 6.1). This will hopefully reduce the risk of bringing in pests and diseases to the site. When planting new species any non-native ones should be removed.

The same principle should be applied to the flower beds at the northern and southern ends of the site; these should also be planted with native species, when planting new plants the non-native ones should be removed. At the junction with Scott Road and the entrance road to the school, on the right hand side, there is another flower/shrub bed (this area is outside of The Firs boundary, but in the Council's ownership). This bed has a clump of field maple in it which are cut regularly at shoulder height, this has caused the trees to grow oddly, not reaching their full

potential and has created bare ground beneath them. The field maples could be coppiced to ground level on a five year rotation, this will allow more light to reach the ground flora enabling grasses to grow and the trees will grow back with a nice dense structure. It will also reduce maintenance costs as rather than cutting them back annually to improve the sightlines onto the main road this will only need to be done every five years.

A hedgerow could be established along the boundary to the cemetery, this would provide for an additional wildlife corridor, join together the habitats of the slightly fragmented middle part of the site, while providing people with a more private space to reflect and spend time with their loved ones.

If successful at the northern end of the site, bulb planting could be continued along the length of the whole avenue to give a fantastic array of flowers in the spring.

Grassland

The grassland along the avenue needs to be maintained as an amenity cut to retain the aesthetics of the avenue. The area of conservation cut should be extended where possible to create a wider margin down each side of the site. Care needs to be taken when managing these areas to avoid cutting any newly planted trees or bulbs.

Ditch

The Council are committed to keeping all of its ditches clear through the engineering department; this ditch is cleared bi-annually. The ditch should be regularly checked for litter or natural blockages to the channel, if it is suitable and safe to do so. Any unnatural waste can be collected and bagged up and left for collection by the grounds maintenance team, natural items can be left on site away from the watercourse to compost. If the items are bulky or dangerous/hazardous they should not be touched and be reported to the Council immediately.

Vegetation should be cleared from the ditch every three years (or more frequently if required) to prevent any build-up of vegetation and potential flood risk. There should be ample room to pile up the small amount of cut vegetation on site away from the watercourse to compost, if not contact the Council who will arrange removal.

Any incidents of reoccurring flooding observed should be reported to the Council to investigate and see if anything can be done to resolve the issue.

Management

The management work at The Firs should be continued along its length incorporating the same standards across both the Council's and BSTC owned land to give a consistent approach. The Council, BSTC and the friends group will all work closely together to raise the profile of the site and achieve the aims and aspirations of the GAP through annual reviews of the action plan. All maintenance items will be monitored and maintained by the Council and BSTC; Highways are responsible for street lighting and the footpaths.

Community Involvement

Local Volunteers

There has been a small amount of volunteer activity carried out on site to date, including keeping the ditch clear, maintaining mature trees and planting new trees. Volunteers play a key role in supporting the site; the current volunteer group will be recognised and supported and an agreed work programme put in place.

Consultations & Public Feedback

Stakeholders and the public have been consulted at each stage of The Firs GAP, from Briefing Document to Draft GAP. All relevant responses have been incorporated into the document.

Marketing

There has been a small amount of publicity about The Firs, from the 'Parks and Beyond' project. The new interpretation panel has also attracted positive feedback. To increase local interest further in The Firs, the 'Parks and Beyond' leaflet should be distributed to the local residents, businesses, schools and college; the County Council's Safer Routes to Schools team are aware of the leaflet. A Walks and More guided walk could be organised to follow the orange route which passes through The Firs, if interest is sufficient.

Aims and Objectives

A A Welcoming Place

To provide a safe and welcoming experience for visitors and users of The Firs

- A1 Provide a suitable network of accessible paths through The Firs
- A2 Ensure that visitors are able to successfully navigate to and from the site

B Healthy, Safe & Secure

To ensure that visitors to The Firs feel safe and able to enjoy the site at all times

- B1 Carrying out reactive tree works to address safety issues
- B2 Proactive response to the misuse of the site
- B3 Ensure all access routes and structures are fit for purpose

C Clean & Well Maintained

To ensure the standard of maintenance is maintained and relevant along the route

- C1 Managing and maintaining the paths and signage
- C2 Removing fly tip, litter picking, empty dog bins and carrying out small scale vegetation management

D Sustainability

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

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

E Conservation

To protect and enhance the biodiversity and historical features that can be found on site

- E1 Maintaining and enhancing all habitats and species on site
- E2 Working with local landowners to protect the biodiversity

F Community Involvement

To support and encourage community involvement at The Firs

- F1 Supporting volunteer activity at The Firs and to ensure all involved operate towards achievement of the GAP
- F2 Encourage the local community to become involved in the management of The Firs in a structured and supported way

G Marketing

To promote awareness and interest in The Firs

- G1 Improving the visitor experience and enhancing opportunities for informing and educating
- G2 Promotion of volunteer and community events at The Firs

Five year Action Plan

Annual Items

Action	Obj No	Specific date	Organisation	Responsible Officer	Indicative Cost		Funding
Conservation cut areas around margins	E1	Sep/Oct	EHF (JOC)	Contracts Compliance Officer	Contract	Rates	Grounds Budget
Review tree planting	E1	Annual	EHF/CMS/Vols/FoTF	Contracts Compliance Officer	Contract	Rates	Grounds Budget
Tree risk management inspections	B1	Ongoing	Arboriculture Contractor	Environment Manager	Contract	Rates	Parks & Open Spaces Budget
Risk inspection and hazard review	B1, B3	Quarterly	EHF	Area Environmental Inspector	Internal Resource		n/a
Arrange for work identified in quarterly risk inspection and hazard review to be completed	B1, B3	Ongoing	EHF	Area Environmental Inspector	Contract	Rates	Grounds Budget
Cut path edges	A1, A2, C1	Ongoing	EHF (JOC)	Contracts Compliance Officer	Contract	Rates	Grounds Budget
Empty dog waste	C2	Weekly	EHF (JOC)	Contracts Compliance Officer	Internal Resource		n/a
Monitor litter picking requirements	C2	Monthly	EHF	Contracts Compliance Officer	Internal Resource		n/a
Amenity cut areas of grassland	D1	3 times per month	EHF (JOC)	Contracts Compliance Officer	Contract	Rates	Grounds Budget
When replacing litter bins move them closer to the road out of the avenue	C2, E1	When required	EHF	Contracts Compliance Officer	Internal Resource		n/a
Develop and promote FoG	F1, F2, G1, G2	Ongoing	EHF/CMS/Vols/FoTF	CMS Officer	n/a		n/a
Securing external funding to ensure the viability of capital works	D1, D2	Ongoing	EHF/CMS	Environment Manager/ CMS Officer	n/a		n/a
Liaise with Bishop's Stortford Town Council to agree a joint management standard for The Firs	E1, E2, F1, F2	Ongoing	EHF/BSTC/ CMS/Vols/FoTF	Contracts Compliance Officer	n/a		n/a
Liaise with local schools, businesses and residents	F2, G1, G2	Ongoing	EHF/BSTC/ CMS/Vols/FoTF	Contracts Compliance Officer	n/a		n/a
Review Action Plans			EHF/BSTC/ CMS/Vols/FoTF				

Abbreviations:

EHF – East Herts Council

CMS – Countryside Management Service

FoTF – Friends of The Firs

Vols - Volunteers

BSTC – Bishop's Stortford Town Council

JOC – John O'Connors

Year 1 Action Plan 2017-2018

Action	Obj No	Specific date	Organisation	Responsible Officer	Indicative Cost	Funding
Remove epicormic growth from the base of standards	E1, F1, F2, G1, G2	Apr-Jun	EHC/CMS/ Vols/FoTF	Contracts Compliance Officer	n/a	n/a
Maintain young trees and their guards – remove when required	E1, F1, F2, G1, G2	When Required	CMS/Vols/ FoTF	CMS Officer	n/a	n/a
Crown lift trees	E1, F1, F2, G1, G2	Sep-Mar	EHC (Contractor)/ BSTC	Contracts Compliance Officer	n/a	n/a
Keep ditch clear of rubbish, cut back any overhanging vegetation	E1, F1, F2, G1, G2	Sep-Mar	EHC/CMS/ Vols/FoTF	Contracts Compliance Officer	n/a	n/a
Plant bulbs along the length of the avenue	E1, F1, F2, G1, G2	Oct	EHC/FoTF	Contracts Compliance Officer	Internal Resource	Grounds Budget
Replace any dead standard trees and re-guard as required	E1, F1, F2, G1, G2	Dec-Feb When Required	EHC (Contractor)/ BSTC/CMS/ Vols/FoTF	Contracts Compliance Officer	Internal Resource	Grounds Budget
Plant a hedgerow along the boundary of the cemetery	E1, F1, F2, G1, G2	Nov-Feb	CMS/Vols/ FoTF/BSTC	CMS Officer/ Contracts Compliance Officer	n/a	n/a
Extend the conservation cut along the boundaries of the site	E1	Sep/Oct	EHC (JOC)/ BSTC	Contracts Compliance Officer	Contract Rates	Grounds Budget
Review Year 1 Action Plan		Mar 18	EHC/CMS/ Vols/FoTF/ BSTC			

Abbreviations:

EHC – East Herts Council

CMS – Countryside Management Service

FoTF – Friends of The Firs

Vols - Volunteers

BSTC – Bishop's Stortford Town Council

JOC – John O'Connors

The Firs GAP Year 1 2017-18

ANNUAL MANAGEMENT ACTIONS

- Cut path edges, amenity area and conservation cut areas
- Review tree planting
- Tree risk management inspections
- Risk inspection & hazard review & undertake identified works
- Empty dog bins
- Monitor litter picking requirements
- Site new bins closer to the road
- Develop & promote FoG
- Secure external funding for capital works
- Liaise with Bishop's Stortford Town Council to agree a joint management standard for The Firs
- Liaise with local schools, businesses and residents
- Review Action Plans

Remove epicormic growth from the base of standard trees

Keep ditch clear of rubbish and remove any over hanging vegetation when required

Maintain young trees and their guards, remove when required

Plant bulbs along the length of the avenue

Plant a couple of new pine trees

Plant a hedgerow along the cemetery boundary

Crown lift trees

Replace dead standards and guards when required

Extend the conservation cut along the boundaries of the site

Key

East Herts Council

Bishop's Stortford Town Council

CMS

Volunteers

dog bin

interp panel

litter bin

pedestrian access

firstrees

amenity cut

conservation cut

ditch

path

scrub

utilities

N

02040

Meters

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Years 2 - 5 Action Plan 2018-2019

Action	Obj No	Specific date	Organisation	Responsible Officer	Indicative Cost	Funding
Remove epicormic growth from the base of standards	E1, F1, F2, G1, G2	Apr-Jun	EHC/CMS/ Vols/FoTF	Contracts Compliance Officer	n/a	n/a
Maintain young trees and their guards – remove when required	E1, F1, F2, G1, G2	When Required	CMS/Vols/ FoTF	CMS Officer	n/a	n/a
Continue to plant bulbs along the length of the avenue if successful and not completed	E1, F1, F2, G1, G2	Oct Year 2	EHC/FoTF	Contracts Compliance Officer	Internal Resource	Grounds Budget
Keep ditch clear of rubbish when required, cut vegetation every 3rd year	E1, F1, F2, G1, G2	Veg Sep-Mar Year 3	EHC/CMS/ Vols/FoTF	Contracts Compliance Officer	n/a	n/a
Replace any dead standard trees and re-guard as required	E1, F1, F2, G1, G2	Dec-Feb When Required	EHC (Contractor)/ BSTC/CMS/ Vols/FoTF	Contracts Compliance Officer	Internal Resource	Grounds Budget
Review Year 2 Action Plan		Mar 19	EHC/CMS/ Vols/FoTF/ BSTC			
Review Year 3 Action Plan		Mar 20	EHC/CMS/ Vols/FoTF/ BSTC			
Review Year 4 Action Plan		Mar 21	EHC/CMS/ Vols/FoTF/ BSTC			
Review Year 5 Action Plan and consult & write new plan		Mar 22	EHC/CMS/ Vols/FoTF/ BSTC			

Abbreviations:

EHC – East Herts Council
 CMS – Countryside Management Service
 FoTF – Friends of The Firs
 Vols - Volunteers
 BSTC – Bishop's Stortford Town Council
 JOC – John O'Connors

The Firs

GAP Year 2-5 2018-22

ANNUAL MANAGEMENT ACTIONS

- Cut path edges, amenity area and conservation cut areas
- Review tree planting
- Tree risk management inspections
- Risk inspection & hazard review & undertake identified works
- Empty dog bins
- Monitor litter picking requirements
- Site new bins closer to the road
- Develop & promote FoG
- Secure external funding for capital works
- Liaise with Bishop's Stortford Town Council to agree a joint management standard for The Firs
- Liaise with local schools, businesses and residents
- Review Action Plans

Yearly
Remove epicormic growth from the base of standard trees

Year 3
Keep ditch clear of rubbish and remove any over hanging vegetation when required

When Required
Maintain young trees and their guards, remove when required

Year 2
Plant bulbs along the length of the avenue

When Required
Replace dead standards and guards when required

Key

East Herts Council

Bishop's Stortford Town Council

CMS

Volunteers

dog bin

interp panel

litter bin

pedestrian access

firstrees

amenity cut

conservation cut

ditch

hedge

path

scrub

utilities

N

0 20 40 Meters

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Appendices

Species List & Tree Planting Guidelines

Species List

Trees that are suitable for planting at The Firs include:

- Pink Chestnut (*Aesculus x carnea*) – Red Buckeye (*Aesculus pavia*) – as replacement trees for the mature tree along the avenue
- Lime (*Tilia x europaea*) – replacement trees for the mature trees along avenue and
- Pine (*Pinus sylvestris*)
- Pine (*Pinus Nigra*)
- Larch (*Larix decidua*)
- Norway Spruce (*Picea Abies*) – all as replacement trees for the mature Fir trees along the edge of the site

Native scrub species include:

- Holly (*Ilex aquifolium*)
- Guelder Rose (*Viburnum opulus*)
- Hawthorn (*Crataegus monogyna*)

Historic species that were planted along the avenue could be considered for individual planting include:

- Spindle (*Euonymus europaea*)
- Laburnham
- Philadelphus
- Mahonia
- Snowball (?*Viburnum* - large white flower clusters)

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

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

Suppliers

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

Where to Plant

Pink Chestnut and Lime trees are replacements for the existing trees along the avenue. The Fir trees are replacements trees for the Firs along the boundary of the site. The shrub species are to be used to increase the scrub margins replacing non-native species.

Planting and Establishment

A suitable sized hole should be dug for replacement trees. The hole is to be a few cm smaller than depth of tree’s rootball and 3 times wider than the rootball. Place rootball in hole with root crown at soil level and fill the hole with soil creating a firm mound around the base of the tree. Spread a lay of well rotten mulch (wood chip) around the base of the trees, 10-15cm deep; avoid direct contact with the base of the tree. This will help to retain moisture and stop the soil becoming compacted.

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

The trees should be watered regularly in the first year to establish the roots system this is undertaken by the contractor who plants the trees. After the first year trees will only need water, on hot days and during droughts.

Planted trees will require regular maintenance for a period of 3-5 years to ensure they establish well. Maintenance includes: watering, checking stakes, ties and guards, removal of guards when trees are mature, formative pruning to promote good form.

Contacts

Address	Contact/Postion	Telephone/Email
East Herts Council Wallfields Pegs Lane Hertford SG13 8EQ	East Herts Council Environmental Services for general enquiries – including Out of Hours Service	Tel: 01279 655261 Email: operations.admin@eastherts.gov.uk Website: www.eastherts.gov.uk
Countryside Management Service (CMS) Countryside Management Service Office (car park H) Environment Department, County Hall, Hertford, Herts, SG13 8DN	For general enquiries	Tel: 01992 588433 Email: northeast.cms@hertfordshire.gov.uk Website: www.hertslink.org/cms
Hertfordshire County Council County Hall Pegs Lane, Hertford Herts, SG13 8DN	For general enquiries	Tel: 0300 1234040 Email: hertsdirect@hertscc.gov.uk Website: www.hertsdirect.org
Environment Agency North East Area Office Apollo Court 2 Bishops Square Business Park St Albans Road West Hatfield, Herts, AL10 9EX	For general enquiries	Tel: 0370 8506506 - general enquiry line Tel: 0800 80 70 60 to report an incident Email: enquiries@environment-agency.gov.uk Website: www.environment-agency.gov.uk
Police Neighbourhood Team Hertford PoliceStation Hale Road (junction with Gascoyne Way) Hertford, Herts, SG13 8ED	Neighbourhood Team	Tel: 101 - Non-emergency number for help, advice and information Always dial 999 in an emergency Website: www.herts.police.uk
Hertfordshire Fire and Rescue Hertford Fire Station Old London Road Hertford, Herts, SG13 7LD	Fire Station Manager	Tel: 01992 507611 (Station) Tel: 0300 1234046 (Fire Safety & Advice) Always dial 999 in an emergency Email: hertford.fire@hertfordshire.gov.uk

1. ADDITIONAL APPENDICIES - ACTION PLANS AND MAPS 2024 - 2029

1.1 Annual management and development actions

Abbreviations: EHC – East Herts Council; CMS – Countryside Management Service; Vols – Volunteers; GGMS - Glendale Grounds Maintenance Services; Con – Contractor; BSTC – Bishop's Stortford Town Council

Ref no	Action	Obj ref	When	Lead	Delivery	Funding	Est Cost £	Spec Ref	Status
0.1	Annual cut of conservation areas around margins	E1	Aug/Sept	EHC	GGMS	GM budget	Contract rates	n/a	
0.2	Carry out annual audit review of pathways	A1, B3	Apr	EHC	EHC	n/a	Internal resource	n/a	
0.3	Tree safety audit and associated works	B1	Ongoing	GGMS	EHC/ GGMS	GM budget	Contract rates	n/a	
0.4	Quarterly risk assessment and hazard review	B1, B3, C1	Ongoing	EHC	EHC	GM budget	Internal resource	n/a	
0.5	Arrange for work identified in quarterly risk assessment and hazard review to be completed	B1, B3	Ongoing	EHC	GGMS/ Con	GM budget	Contract rates	n/a	
0.6	Undertake repairs/replacements/ installation of site furniture in accordance with previous year's audit	C1, B3	All year	EHC	Con/Vols	GM budget	Internal resource	n/a	
0.7	Maintain all entrances across the site free from encroaching vegetation and obstructions	B1, B3	Ongoing	EHC	GGMS	GM budget	Internal resource	n/a	
0.8	Cut path edges	A1, A2, C1	Ongoing	EHC	GGMS	GM budget	Contract rates	n/a	
0.9	Empty dog waste bins	C2	Weekly	EHC	GGMS	n/a	Internal resource	n/a	

0.10	When replacing litter bins, move them closer to the road out of the avenue	C2, E1	When required	EHC	EHC	n/a	Internal resource	n/a	
0.11	Remove epicormic growth from the base of trees as required	E1, F1, F2, G1, G2	Apr-Jun annually	EHC	Vols	n/a	n/a	n/a	
0.12	Maintain shrub beds through trimming and weeding as required	E1, F1, F2, G1, G2	Sept-Feb	EHC	GGMS	n/a	n/a	n/a	
0.13	Plant further standard trees according to species and planting guidelines and maintain existing planted trees	E1, F1, F2, G1, G2	All year	EHC	GGMS	n/a	n/a	9.6	
0.14	Secure external funding to ensure viability of capital works	D1, D2	Ongoing	CMS	EHC/ CMS	n/a	n/a	n/a	
0.15	Information sharing to take place via regular website updates (EHC, CMS, ParksHerts) and locally accessed media	F1, F2	All year	EHC	EHC	n/a	Internal resource	n/a	
0.16	Promote the opportunities that the park offers as a location for events and activities	F2, G1, G2	All year	EHC	EHC	n/a	Internal resource	n/a	
0.17	Engage with local groups that are interested in The Firs and make use of their knowledge/skills/time	F2, G1, G2	Ongoing	EHC	EHC/ CMS	n/a	n/a	n/a	
0.18	Manage bramble, snowberry encroachment across the site	E1, F1, F2, G1, G2	Sept-Feb	EHC	Vols	n/a	n/a	n/a	
0.19	Review potential areas for wildflower seed sowing	E1	Ongoing	CMS	CMS/ EHC	n/a	n/a	n/a	

Task Responsibility

☐ District led	} Officer/Contractor delivered
☐ CMS led	
☐ District led	} Volunteer delivered
☐ CMS led	

Other Actions

- Secure external funding to ensure viability of capital works. ☐
- Information sharing via website updates (EHC, CMS, ParkHerts and news articles) ☐
- Promote opportunities that the park offers and a location for events around Bishops Stortford. ☐
- Engage with local groups that are interested in the site to make use of their knowledge. ☐
- Carry out annual audit review of all pathways. ☐
- Arrange for works identified in the quarterly risk assessment and hazard review to be completed. ☐
- Undertake repair/replacement of site furniture as required. ☐
- Plant standard trees according to species and planting guidelines. ☐
- Tree safety audit and associated work. ☐
- Trim epicormic growth around the base of standard trees as required. ☐
- Manage encroaching bramble and snowberry across the site. ☐
- Review potential areas for wildflower seeding. ☐

The Firs
 Greenspace Action Plan
 2024-29
 Annual Actions

Legend

- Dog bin
- i Interp panel
- Litter bin
- x Pedestrian access
- The Firs Boundary
- Individual trees
- Amenity cut
- Conservation cut
- Ditch
- Path
- Scrub
- Utilities



Scale @ A3
 1:1,800

Date
 May 2024

Rev
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Countryside Management Service

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1.3 Year 1 Actions 2024-25

Ref no	Action	Obj ref	When	Lead	Delivery	Funding	Est Cost £	Spec Ref	Status
1.1	Maintain young trees and their guards – remove when required	E1	When Required	EHC	Vols	GM budget	Internal resource		
1.2	Keep ditch clear of rubbish, cut back overhanging vegetation	E1, C2	Sep-Mar	EHC	GGMS	n/a	n/a		
1.3	Plant bulbs on the avenue where not already planted and appropriate	E1, , F1, F2	Oct	EHC	Vols	GM budget	n/a		
1.4	Replace any dead standard trees	E1	When Required	EHC	GGMS	GM budget	£300 per tree		
1.5	Extend the conservation cut along the site boundaries	E1	Sep/Oct	EHC	GGMS/ Vols	GM budget	n/a		
1.6	Change amenity cut areas to enhanced amenity mowing	E1	Mar-Oct	EHC	GGMS	Grounds Budget	n/a		
1.7	Underplant area as outlined on the map	E1, F1, F2, G1, G2	Dec 24/Jan 25	EHC	Vols	n/a	n/a		
1.8	Review entrance signage and general site signage and replace where necessary	A1, A2, C1, C2	By Mar 25	CMS	CMS/ EHC	n/a	n/a		
1.9	Install a bench at Waytemore Road end	A2, B3	By Mar 25	EHDC	Con	n/a	n/a		
1.10	Review Year 1 Action Plan		Mar 25	EHC	EHC/ CMS	n/a	n/a		

Task Responsibility

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|------------------------------|
| <div><div></div> District led</div> | Officer/Contractor delivered |
| <div><div></div> CMS led</div> | |
| <div><div></div> District led</div> | Volunteer delivered |
| <div><div></div> CMS led</div> | |

The Firs

Greenspace Action Plan

2024-29

Year 1 Actions

Legend

- Dog bin
- Interp panel
- Litter bin
- Pedestrian access
- The Firs Boundary
- Individual trees
- Amenity cut
- Conservation cut
- Ditch
- Path
- Scrub
- Utilities

Other actions

- Review year 1 action plan

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Date
May 2024

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New Town

Windhill
Primary
School

Allot
Gdns

Allot
Gdns

Replace any dead
standard trees as required

Install bench at this end
of the site

Review signage and replace
where needed

Keep ditch clear of rubbish and remove
any over hanging vegetation when required

Maintain young trees and
their guards, remove when
required

Plant bulbs along the
avenue, where appropriate

Change amenity cut areas
to enhanced amenity

Underplant this area
with hazel and hawthorn

WINDHILL

CHESTNUT CL

FIRLANDS
NAPTON F

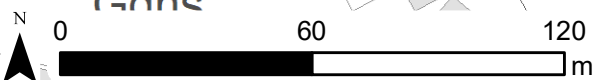
SCOTT ROAD

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WATERMORE ROAD

LINK W



1.5 Year 2-5 Actions 2025-29

Ref no	Action	Obj ref	When	Lead	Delivery	Funding	Est Cost £	Spec Ref	Status
3.1	Maintain young trees and their guards - remove guards when required in year 2 and year 3	E1	When Required	EHC	Vols	GM budget	Internal resource	n/a	
3.2	Continue to plant bulbs along the length of the avenue if successful and not completed	E1, F1, F2, G1, G2	Oct Year 2	EHC	Vols	n/a	Internal resource	n/a	
3.3	Keep ditch clear of rubbish and cut vegetation as required	E1, F1, F2, G1, G2	Sep-Mar Year 3	EHC	GGMS/ Vols	n/a	Internal resource	n/a	
3.4	Replace any dead standard trees and re-guard as required	E1	Dec-Feb When Required	EHC	GGMS	GM budget	Internal resource	n/a	
3.5	Remove bramble and plant hedging in year 2.	E1, F1, F2, G1, G2	Dec 24/Jan 25	EHC	GGMS/ Vols	n/a	n/a	n/a	
3.5	Review Year 2 Action Plan.		Year 2 Mar 2026	CMS	EHC/CMS	n/a	Internal resource	n/a	
3.6	Review Year 3 Action Plan.		Year 3 Mar 2027	CMS	EHC/CMS	n/a	Internal resource	n/a	
3.7	Review Year 4 Action Plan.		Year 4 Mar 2028	CMS	EHC/CMS	n/a	Internal resource	n/a	
3.8	Review Year 5 Action Plan and produce a new Greenspace Action Plan for 2029 – 2034.		Year 5 Mar 2029	CMS	EHC/CMS	n/a	Internal resource	n/a	

Task Responsibility

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

The Firs
 Greenspace Action Plan
 2024-29
 Years 2-5 Actions

Legend

- Dog bin
- i Interp panel
- Litter bin
- x Pedestrian access
- The Firs Boundary
- Individual trees
- Amenity cut
- Conservation cut
- Ditch
- Path
- Scrub
- Utilities

Other actions

- Review year 2 action plan □
- Review year 3 action plan □
- Review year 4 action plan □
- Review year 5 action plan and write new GAP □

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Date
 May 2024

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- Wallfields, Hertford