



# **BISHOP'S PARK**

## **GREENSPACE ACTION PLAN**

**2026 – 2031**



## OVERVIEW

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### Greenspace Action Plans

Greenspace Actions Plans (GAPs) are map-based management plans which specify activities that should take place on a site over a stated period; these activities will help to deliver the agreed aspirations which the site managers and stakeholders have identified for that site. The plan is set out sequentially, first providing background information on the site (Site Description) and an assessment of its condition and opportunities for improvement (Analysis and Evaluation). This is developed into Aims and Objectives for the site, a set of Action Plans which identify how these objectives will be achieved, and detailed specifications for the work to complete the actions.

### Public Engagement

Engagement with stakeholders is at the centre of effective management planning on any site. An engagement period will be held for this GAP in June 2026, to enable stakeholders to comment on the proposed management actions for the site. An engagement summary will be included as an appendix to this plan detailing the engagement process and summarising the comments received and any amendments made to the plan as a result.

### Version Control

| Version | Issue Date | Details                    | Author | Reviewed | Approved |
|---------|------------|----------------------------|--------|----------|----------|
| 0       |            | Draft issue for engagement | SR     | GA       |          |
|         |            |                            |        |          |          |
|         |            |                            |        |          |          |
|         |            |                            |        |          |          |

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## **1.0 WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION**

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### **1.1 Vision Statement**

Valued and well-used by the local community, Bishop's Park will be maintained to a high standard. Fostering biodiverse habitats and inclusive public access, management will continue to enhance the value of the site for both people and wildlife.

### **1.2 Introduction**

Bishop's Park is a 5.97ha public greenspace which features species rich grassland and a young woodland as well as outdoor fitness equipment and two play areas. It is located on the west of Bishop's Stortford, forming part of a green corridor extending towards the centre of the town. The site is well connected by the Public Rights of Way network passing through the site, enabling walking and cycling from the surrounding settlement out to the countryside.

The site contains a mosaic of grassland, woodland, hedgerows and ditches. The grassland within the park and the neighbouring fields are notable for their species richness, supporting orchids, grass vetchling and red bartsia. This high diversity is the result of historic turf stripping revealing nutrient poor soils that favour less competitive species.

The hedgerows are the historic boundary features of the agricultural field pattern which existed prior to the site becoming a public greenspace. These hedgerows, and perhaps some of the trees within them, are centuries old and have historic as well as ecological value.

The two main blocks of woodland, despite being only 30 years old have begun to develop characteristics of mature woodlands with a distinct understorey layer and established hazel coppice stools.

Bishop's Park is a popular local site for families and dog walkers. The immediate proximity of the park to the surrounding residential area makes this site a highly valued asset to the local residents and with few visitors from further afield it remains a quiet space for recreation. The site is a valuable community resource which provides opportunities for play, informal exercise and enjoyment of nature.

## **2.0 SITE DESCRIPTION**

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### **2.1 Site Summary**

Site Name: Bishop's Park

Site Address: Woodpecker Close, Bishop's Stortford, CM23 4QG

Grid Reference: TL473210

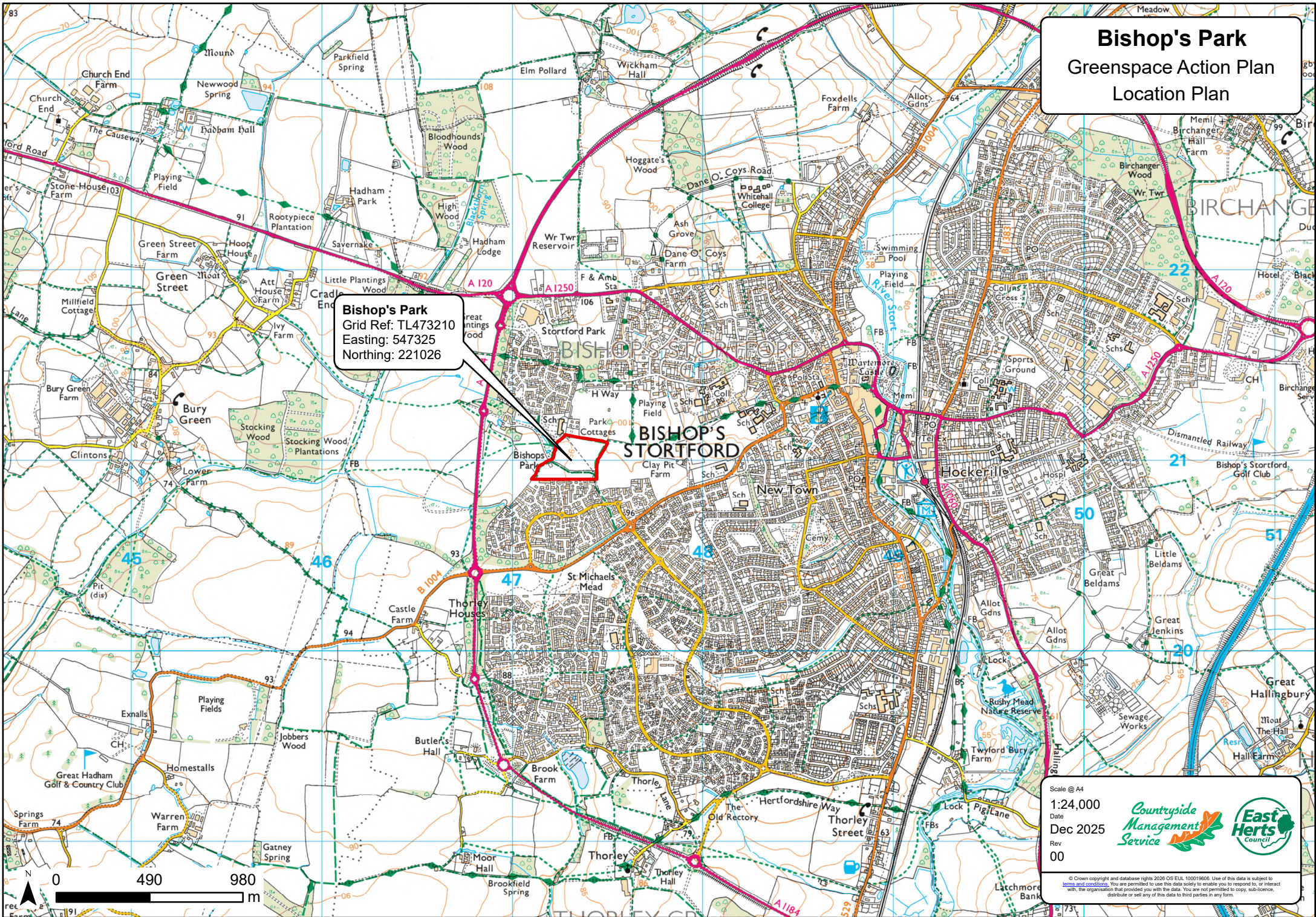
Size: 5.97ha

Designations: None

Owner: East Herts Council

# Bishop's Park Greenspace Action Plan Location Plan

**Bishop's Park**  
Grid Ref: TL473210  
Easting: 547325  
Northing: 221026



Scale @ A4  
1:24,000  
Date  
Dec 2025  
Rev  
00



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# Bishop's Park

## Greenspace Action Plan

### Site Description

**Legend**








- Bench
- Dog bin
- i Interpretation
- Pedestrian gate
- Litter bin
- Tree
- Vehicle gate
- ◇ Lighting
- Hedgerow
- Ditch
- Unsurfaced Path
- Surfaced Path
- Surfaced Path (sealed)
- Line of trees
- Grassland
- Sealed surface
- Broadleaved woodland
- Play area
- Unsealed surface
- Amenity grassland
- Site boundary

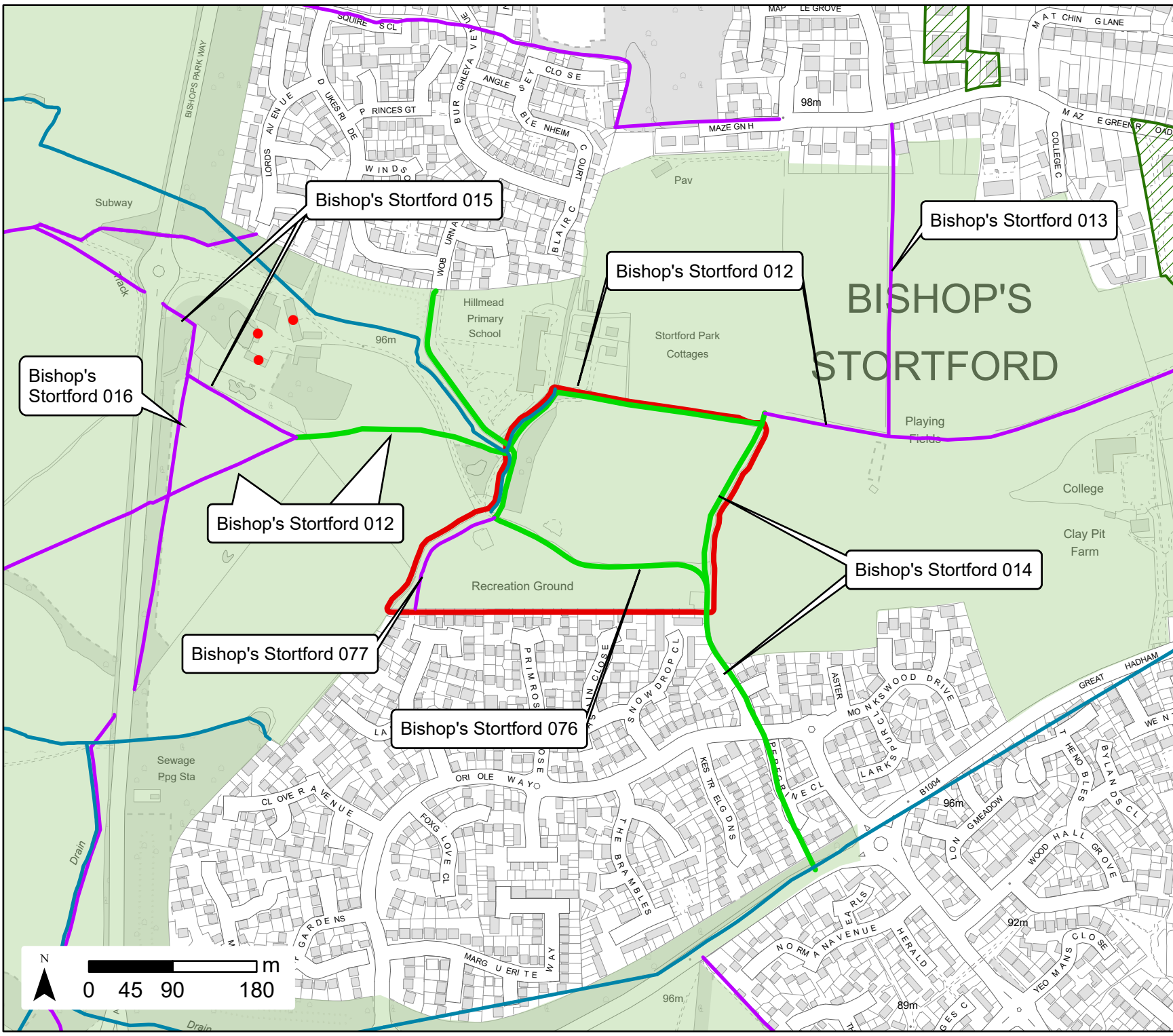


Scale @ A4  
 1:2,000  
 Date  
 Mar 2026  
 Rev  
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# Bishop's Park Greenspace Action Plan Constraints Plan

- Legend**
-  Site boundary
  -  Listed Building
  -  Bridleway
  -  Footpath
  -  Ordinary watercourses
  -  Conservation Area
  -  Greenbelt - November 2016



Bishop's Stortford 015

Bishop's Stortford 013

Bishop's Stortford 012

Bishop's Stortford 016

Bishop's Stortford 012

Bishop's Stortford 014

Bishop's Stortford 077

Bishop's Stortford 076

Scale @ A4  
1:5,500  
Date  
Jan 2026  
Rev  
00



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## **2.2 Designations**

Bishop's Park has no designations relating to the natural or historic environment.

## **2.3 Landscape Character**

The site does not sit within a Landscape Character Area, being set in the urban area of Bishop's Stortford, however it forms an extension of the countryside reaching towards the centre of the town from the Perry Green Uplands LCA to the west. It continues some of the characteristics of the Perry Green Upland, a gently undulating landscape which retains some of its traditional irregular field patterns. Hedgerows mark the boundaries of small to medium-sized fields and are typically either species rich with hawthorn, blackthorn, dogwood and hazel, or consist purely of elm. There are areas of trees amongst arable farmland, with pockets of woodland and pasture around the settlements. The built environment features well-kept historic farmhouses and cottages.

Green corridors like this provide valuable access to the countryside for people living in built up areas especially when they are accessible via Public Rights of Way as Bishop's Park is.

## **2.4 Geology and Hydrology**

The soil of the site is predominantly lime rich loamy and clayey soils which drain poorly, and the overall topography of the site is very flat. Topsoil was successively removed from the site when it was farmed for turf, leaving subsoils with low nutrient levels at the surface.

Ditches running along the central hedgerow and along the western edge of the site accept surface run off preventing standing water collecting in amenity areas. As a result, the risk of surface water flooding in the site is very low. The watercourse running along the west of the site is an ordinary watercourse which often contains water year round. Works which may impact the flow or storage of water in an ordinary watercourse require consent from Hertfordshire County Council as the Lead Local Flood Authority.

The underlying bedrock is part of the Thames Group, which has similarly low permeability and does not support the aquifers which are found to the west and north of the county.

## **2.5 History and Archaeology**

In the 13th century this land may have formed part of the vast estate of the Bishop of London's deer park, and it is to this that name Bishop's Park refers. The deer park

later became farmland belonging to Stortford Park Farm, which was built in the 16<sup>th</sup> century and still exists to the west of the park. Most recently before being turned into a public greenspace, the site was used to grow grass turf which resulted in low nutrient levels in the soil ideal for species rich grassland.

The surrounding land was sold for housing development in the 1980s and Bishop's Park was created to serve the new residents.

No archaeological finds have been recorded at Bishop's Park although the hedgerows are the historic field boundaries of the site and should be protected for their historic as well as ecological significance.

## **2.6 Habitats and Wildlife**

### ***2.6.1 Grassland***

The historic management of cutting turf for sale in the larger grassland compartment removed the nutrient rich topsoil and left low nutrient soils. Combined with the presence of yellow rattle and red bartsia which parasitise grasses, weakening the grass growth and creating patches of shorter sward where smaller flowering plants can establish, these conditions support a relatively high diversity of species in the main field. A strip on the north side of site was recently seeded and supports approximately 10 species per square metre including grass vetchling and goat's beard alongside familiar species seen in many of the meadow areas created within greenspaces over recent years. Orchids have also been found within the grassland in previous years suggesting that the site can support them with suitable management.

The northern field is managed through a conservation cut where it is cut annually in late summer or autumn and the arisings removed, allowing plants to flower and set seed each year. The southern compartment is cut more regularly to provide space with shorter sward for recreational activities.

### **2.6.2 Woodland**

The two large blocks of woodland were planted in the 1990s and are dominated by native broadleaved species including pedunculate oak, rowan, holly and wild cherry. These bands of trees act as a screen between the greenspace and the neighbouring houses. Despite being only 30 years old characteristics of a mature woodland have begun to develop, with a distinct understorey layer, established hazel coppice stools (pictured right), and natural regeneration taking place.



The small block of woodland in the northeast corner, which was planted approximately 15 years ago, circa 2010, has now developed a closed canopy and the stand is very dense with a second generation of trees beginning to develop. A further woodland block was planted in the northwest of the site in 2024.

### **2.6.3 Hedgerows**

The external boundary hedges of the site are very tall though they still have a dense structure down to ground level. These hedges also contain a number of mature trees which can be highly valuable to wildlife.

The central hedgerow running parallel to the road is kept shorter allowing views between the north and south of the site and contains trees with a broader range of ages. Both this hedge and the hedge to the west of the southern compartment are associated with ditches.

All of the hedges are species rich, containing a mix of blackthorn, hawthorn, field maple, dogwood and hazel, offering longer flowering and fruiting seasons for pollinators and other wildlife than single species hedges.

### **2.6.4 Specimen trees**

A line of trees along the road and a collection of individual trees including wild cherry, ash, common lime, and hornbeam were planted in the 1990s. These trees are not yet mature though some have begun to develop veteran features such as loose bark which provide ecological niches for wildlife.

In 2000 another avenue was planted along the path leading from the young children's play area towards Primrose Close. Some trees within this line are notably smaller where failed trees have been replaced.

### **2.6.5 Ditches**

The two ditches running through the site accept surface run off from the grassland to prevent flooding of the site. The ditch associated with the central hedge is often dry but has ecological value as part of the habitat corridor of the hedgerow. The watercourse running along the west of the site and passing through culvert under the private road is an ordinary watercourse which often contains water year round. The water is partially shaded by the adjacent hedge and difficult to view due to the presence of tall vegetation.

## **2.7 Access, Facilities and Infrastructure**

The main entrance of the site follows a single track road from Woodpecker Close and leads to the car park through a 1.95m height barrier. The car park fits 8 cars without marked spaces, which is usually sufficient as most site users live locally and travel to the site by foot. An earth bank prevents driving onto the grassland and minimises the visual impact of the car park from adjacent grassland.

There is a map panel near the car park which provides information about the site and walking routes between this and other local greenspaces. The map uses icons for features of interest around the site although the text has low contrast against the background which may be difficult to read for some visitors.

There are three other pedestrian entrances from the south with chicane barriers to prevent vehicle access on these paths. The entrance at the northeast from the college has a kissing gate however users of the bridleway (Bishop's Stortford 012) can go around this off the path. The entrance on the west of the site leading to Woburn Avenue has no barrier. Each of these entrances has discrete welcome signage (right).



In addition to the road, there are surfaced footpaths along the south and east edges of the main field and through the smaller field. There are unsurfaced paths through the woodlands and along the north of the main field. There is also a mown fitness trail around the main grassland. The road, parallel path and the path from Larksway have streetlighting making the site more welcoming to visitors crossing the site at night.

There are three bridleways, Bishop's Stortford 012, 014, and 076, which encircle the larger grassland compartment following the surfaced road and other paths enabling journeys between the south, from Woodpecker Close, east, from Bishop's Stortford College, and west, towards Woburn Avenue. A footpath, Bishop's Stortford 077,

follows the surfaced path from the entrance from Larksway to the surfaced road running through the site where it meets the bridleway.

There are two play areas within the park, one young children's play area and a newer, informal play area for mixed ages featuring an interactive goal game board, fitness equipment and sensory planting.

There are numerous benches of varying styles throughout the site and a picnic bench near the young children's play area. There are also a number of bins around the site for both general waste and dog waste.

## **2.8 Community and Events**

Bishop's Park is a popular local site for families, dog walkers and those wishing to enjoy nature. The immediate proximity of the park to the surrounding residential area makes this site a highly valued asset to the local residents although there are few site users visiting by car from further afield.

The site is promoted through the East Herts Council and ParksHerts websites. These briefly describe the site and the facilities available and refer to the paths as pushchair friendly. The ParksHerts website also describes how to reach the site by various means of transport. The East Herts Council webpage links to the Parks and Beyond Circular Walks leaflet, which describes two circular walks joining five local greenspaces including Bishop's Park.

Bishop's Park does not have a Friends of group, however the Friends of Pishiobury Park occasionally undertake activities at neighbouring parks within Bishop's Stortford including Bishop's Park.

## **2.9 Site Management and Sustainability**

### ***2.9.1 Site Management***

East Herts Council procure a management contract to cover their green spaces. The current contract is with Glendale, who were appointed in 2020 on an 8 year contract, with a potential 5 year extension. As well as regular maintenance requirements, the contract has provision for additional ad hoc items. This contract includes emptying bins, cleaning signage and benches, maintenance of ornamental beds, and grass and hedge cutting on a regular basis.

### ***2.9.2 Health and Safety***

Tree safety surveys and safety inspections of play equipment are undertaken annually with mitigation works arranged to reflect the recommendations made. Mown

paths in the grassland act as fire breaks to mitigate the risk of fires being started in the grassland during droughts.

### ***2.9.3 Environmental Sustainability***

Pesticides, including glyphosate, are not used routinely within the park except in exceptional circumstances where there is a clear need, such as managing threat to the public or property, and no viable alternative. Where their use is unavoidable, measures will be put in place to minimise wider impact.

To minimise risks of spreading invasive species and biosecurity risks, all plants and seeds planted within the site are come from local sources.

## **3.0 ANALYSIS & EVALUATION**

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### **3.1 Habitats and Wildlife**

#### **3.1.1 *Grassland***

The management of the grassland should aim to maximise the diversity of species, similar to what has been achieved in the seeded strip of grassland by sowing additional areas with a high diversity meadow seed mix. Continuing the current regime of cutting in early autumn and removing arisings in the northern field will allow species from the seeded areas to spread to the rest of the grassland naturally over time. With its higher than usual species diversity, this site has potential to become a valuable seed donor site to other local greenspaces in the future and should be considered as a potential Local Wildlife Site.

To maintain the diversity of the grassland it is important that wildflowers are allowed to set seed before cutting, which is typically between June and September depending on species. The mown paths through the grassland also increase the structural diversity of the sward overall, providing micro habitats which support a different suite of species. Diversity in the southern compartment can be supported while maintaining the amenity value by leaving grass uncut throughout May and June allowing mowing tolerant species to set seed.

Small areas, collectively occupying up to a tenth of the grass can be left uncut as long grass over winter to provide shelter for invertebrates, essential for caterpillars of some butterflies. To prevent thatch developing in the sward and ensure scrub does not encroach onto the grassland, the areas which are left long must be change every year or two.

#### **3.1.2 *Woodland***

The two oldest blocks of woodland have begun to develop characteristics of a mature woodland with a distinct understorey layer, but as the canopy matures it risks shading out younger and smaller plants. To ensure sufficient light is available to support the growth of the next generation of trees and promote the development of a herbaceous community, the woodland will be thinned, removing 1 in 10 trees from the canopy. The established coppice stools should be coppiced as part of a regular regime to encourage denser regrowth, repeating the practice in 7 to 10 years.

The 15 year old block of woodland should also be thinned to create a less dense structure where trees have begun competing heavily for light and space. Thinning in this block may remove up to 1 in 5 trees, leaving individual specimens in good condition to develop into mature trees. Some of the felled material generated by the thinning can be left on site as dead wood and habitat piles. Dead wood is vital for a range of fungi and invertebrates, which in turn provide food for other species.

The ash trees present in the older areas of woodland show very limited signs of dieback. Where Ash Dieback is considered to be a severe threat to the health of an individual tree, it may be felled as part of tree safety works. The felled stems should be left on site to avoid further spread of the disease and provide additional dead wood.

### **3.1.3 Hedgerows**

Hedgerows are an important commuting habitat for a range of species including hedgehogs and bats and should be managed in a way which supports this function as well as promoting flowering and fruiting to provide foraging opportunities.

The boundary hedges can be reduced to between 1.5 and 2m in height to ensure they do not become overmature and prone to gaps at the base. The central hedgerow may be kept shorter than the boundary hedges to ensure views across the site. All of the hedges should be cut on rotation every 2 to 3 years to allow fruiting in the more productive later years, taking care not to damage trees within the hedges.

A buffer margin should be left uncut next to each hedgerow to develop coarser tussocky vegetation between the hedgerow and the mown grass path to create a transitional habitat which provides shelter for invertebrates and small mammals over winter. This margin can be cut every 2 to 3 years to prevent it developing into scrub. Reducing the frequency of cutting for the hedge and margins also help to minimise root compaction by cutting machinery, supporting the health of the hedgerow and the trees within it.

### **3.1.4 Specimen Trees**

Mature specimen trees, including those within hedgerows, can be immensely valuable to wildlife, providing shelter and foraging opportunities to a wide range of species. To prevent damage to trees and minimise the risk of tree failure, a 1 metre circle around the base of each tree can be left uncut in most years, carefully cutting around the tree once every three years, similar to the buffer margin along hedgerows described above. This protects the base of the stem from damage during mowing, helps retain soil moisture for the tree during dry periods and provides a refuge for wildlife over winter.

### **3.1.5 Ditches**

Due to the differing water levels within the two ditches in Bishop's Park, they support different species however both ditches can be improved by relaxing cutting regimes to once every 2 years, alternating cutting between the two ditches. Desilting may be required periodically but no more than once every 12 years, again staggering works between the two ditches.

## **3.2 Access, Facilities and Infrastructure**

### **3.2.1 Access**

Welcoming visitors to the site must start before they arrive, when they are deciding whether or not to visit. This is because the majority of people looking for access information are much less likely to visit a destination, if they cannot find the information they need. Accessibility information on the ParksHerts and EHC webpages is currently limited and should be updated. It acknowledges that the site has pushchair friendly paths and provides information on how to reach the site but is missing other information which would be useful for people with disabilities such as a description of the terrain, the location of the nearest public toilets, or what formats interpretation is provided in.

The paths onsite are generally level with a good surface, although unsurfaced paths may become muddy during wet weather, and the central road and footpath from Larksway (Bishop's Stortford 077) are well lit by street lighting. All paths are sufficiently wide for low level use and kept clear of trip hazards. Regular checks should be undertaken as part of routine grounds maintenance to ensure low branches are not hanging across the path as obstacles to users, particularly within the woodland and around entrances.

The central gate is a large kissing gate which allows space for double pushchairs and mobility scooters to manoeuvre. The northeast gate (pictured right) on the bridleway leading to the college fields is a kissing gate only suitable for pedestrians and not wheelchairs. This should be replaced with a bridleway gate, however the gap in the boundary to the side of the northeast gate (off the path) mitigates the impact to site users.



The park is accessible via bridleways from multiple directions and there is good potential for visitors to travel to the site by bike. This could be better supported by installing bike racks. Physical activity could also be encouraged by promoting further walking routes, or a daily mile route given the proximity to schools.

### **3.2.2 Infrastructure**

The existing interpretation was installed as part of the Parks and Beyond walking routes scheme and provides an overview of the site, its history and current management, as well as directing visitors to the promoted walking route. New interpretation will be created to highlight the grassland habitat and its value to wildlife

and people. To improve accessibility of signage, new and existing interpretation could also be provided online in a plain text version suitable for use with text to speech software.

Benches are mostly gathered around the two play areas and the variety of styles meet the needs of most users. One of these could be marked as a 'chatter bench', continuing the initiative trialled at other parks in the district to combat isolation. There is only one picnic bench, which is located beneath the trees next to the young children's play area. A second picnic bench with space for wheelchairs could be installed adjoining a surfaced path to provide a more inclusive seating offer.

Furniture including interpretation will be cleaned and maintained regularly to ensure it is fit for purpose and text remains legible.

There are both general waste bins and dog bins throughout the park, however some of these have become damaged and these bins should be replaced with dual purpose waste bins or removed as appropriate to ensure the site appears well maintained.

East Herts Council is currently undertaking a review of the play facilities for older children at Bishop's Park. The new park upgrade will focus on engaging older children and teenagers, with specific emphasis on providing a welcoming and appealing space for teenage girls. Working with play area contractors and the police EHC aims to deliver a new and exciting space, with multiple activities and areas to socialise.

### **3.2.3 Safety**

Tree safety surveys and safety inspections of play equipment will continue to be undertaken annually with mitigation works arranged as required to reflect the recommendations made.

With the increasing variability of summer weather and frequency of droughts due to climate change, the risk of fires starting in the grassland has risen. This risk will be mitigated by maintaining the mown grass strips through the grasslands as fire breaks. Where the grassland vegetation has completely dried out it may also be necessary to undertake the annual grassland cut earlier in the year, however this should be avoided while vegetation is still actively in flower as early cutting could prevent some flowering plants, including orchids, from setting seed.

Safety is not currently a concern within the park owing to the lighting along the Public Rights of Way and good sightlines across the park. The central hedge should be kept under 1.5m to maintain these sightlines. There is no Automated External Defibrillator (AED) on site, the nearest AED is at the end of Bishop's Stortford 012 near Bishop's Stortford College Pre-Prep.

Oak processionary moth (OPM) has not been found within Bishop's Park, however this site is within the Established Zone for this invasive species, and it is the responsibility of landowners to manage OPM on their land. If a potential OPM sighting is identified on site, either through the course of regular inspections, maintenance activities or reported to EHC by a third party or member of the public, appropriate action will be undertaken based on current best practice and the level of risk posed to public health.

### **3.3 Community and Events**

Bishop's Park is a valuable community resource which provides opportunities for play, informal exercise and engaging with nature. The site is promoted online through ParksHerts and EHC webpages and as part of the Parks and Beyond walking routes. Parks throughout the district are also promoted by the Council during Love Parks Week at the end of July, which celebrates the connection between communities and their local parks.

CMS conservation volunteers are able to deliver tasks on site where appropriate. Volunteer activities could be used as opportunities to promote volunteering as a means to become actively involved in site management. Volunteering is a tried and tested way of increasing interest and care for a site, whilst providing participants with the benefits of healthy activity, socialisation and time spent in nature. Future opportunities will be explored to establish a small volunteer network to support the management of Bishop's Park.

Guided walks, talks and other events can likewise engage members of the community and cultivate interest in the sites and their maintenance. There are no publicly advertised events held at Bishop's Park currently however with the increasing biodiversity interest of the habitats and opportunities for wider guided walks using the PRow network there is scope for the site to host a variety of events.

### **3.4 Sustainability**

#### ***3.4.1 Environmental sustainability***

The Council has a strong commitment to environmental sustainability and recognises the impacts its operations have on the environment, as well as its capacity to promote behavioural change among residents.

The Council has taken the following steps to ensure the site is managed in a way that has a positive impact on the environment, locally and globally, both now and for the future:

- Adopting peat, herbicide and pesticide free grounds maintenance, except where there is net benefit to the environment (e.g. to prevent spread of invasive species). Glyphosate specifically is being phased out of use of in grounds maintenance.
- Fostering biodiverse habitats which are more resilient to climate change.
- Increasing carbon sequestration by increasing the coverage of tree canopies, particularly in urban areas.
- Avoiding the creation of sealed (impermeable) artificial surfaces to increase ground water penetration and reduce surface run-off into drains and watercourses.
- Ensuring materials used on site are sustainably sourced and reusing natural materials generated on site where appropriate.
- Ensuring that contractors follow best practice with regards to environmental protection.

The following actions will further enhance the environmental sustainability of the site:

- Facilitating active travel to enable residents to undertake more zero carbon journeys.
- Managing trees in a way which minimises the need for additional watering.

### **3.4.2 Biodiversity Net Gain**

Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) is a statutory requirement that all developments must increase the ecological value of the development site by 10%. This ensures that habitats for wildlife are left in a measurably better state than they were before the development, rather than just mitigating harm to nature. For the purposes of planning, biodiversity value is measured in standardised biodiversity units using a metric tool that assigns numerical values to habitats based on their type, condition, size, and location. Where BNG cannot be delivered on site, biodiversity value of a nearby site can be improved instead.

A formal habitat and condition assessment survey has not been undertaken as part of the development of this management plan. However, indicative current and potential habitat types and conditions for the main habitats within Bishop’s Park are provided in the tables below.

Table 1: Area habitats

| Main habitat type | Area (ha) | Biodiversity metric habitat type | Current habitat condition | Potential habitat condition | Potential biodiversity net gain |
|-------------------|-----------|----------------------------------|---------------------------|-----------------------------|---------------------------------|
|-------------------|-----------|----------------------------------|---------------------------|-----------------------------|---------------------------------|

|                  |      |                            |          |          |                      |
|------------------|------|----------------------------|----------|----------|----------------------|
|                  |      |                            |          |          | (biodiversity units) |
| Grassland        | 0.07 | Other neutral grassland    | Good     | Good     | 0                    |
| Grassland        | 2.91 | Other neutral grassland    | Moderate | Good     | 8.15                 |
| Grassland        | 0.86 | Other neutral grassland    | Poor     | Moderate | 2.77                 |
| Woodland         | 1.58 | Other broadleaved woodland | Moderate | Good     | 4.43                 |
| Woodland         | 0.06 | Other broadleaved woodland | Poor     | Moderate | 0.17                 |
| Individual trees | 0.14 | Rural tree                 | Moderate | Moderate | 0                    |

Table 2: Linear habitats

| Main habitat type | Length (m) | UKHab current habitat type                    | Current habitat condition | Potential habitat condition | Potential biodiversity net gain (biodiversity units) |
|-------------------|------------|---|---------------------------|-----------------------------|--|
| Hedgerow          | 360        | Species rich with trees                       | Good                      | Good                        | 0  |
| Hedgerow          | 396        | Species rich with trees associated with ditch | Good                      | Good                        | 0  |
| Line of trees     | 90         | Line of trees                                 | Moderate                  | Moderate                    | 0  |
| Line of trees     | 97         | Line of trees                                 | Poor                      | Moderate                    | 0.1  |

This increase in biodiversity could be achieved within 15 years (i.e. by 2040) by implementing the management described in section 3.1. The area south of the road is recorded within the Local Nature Recovery Strategy as a strategically significant area for enhancing grassland biodiversity with urban greenspaces.

In order for Bishop's Park to be put forward as an offsetting site for biodiversity net gain, a detailed survey of habitat type and condition would need to be carried out to confirm the habitat baseline, and a biodiversity net gain habitat management plan would need to be produced.

### **3.4.3 *Financial sustainability***

To ensure the ongoing maintenance costs are financially sustainable, the council will maximise the use of existing resources and endeavour to achieve proposed works within the available site maintenance budget or by securing external funding. A number of actions proposed within this document are funding and/or capacity dependent and external funding sources will be explored regularly to facilitate these prospective actions. The time that volunteers contribute is a valuable resource and should be made best use of in achieving the aims and objectives set out within this GAP. To this end, opportunities for achieving the most beneficial prospective actions of the plan through volunteer activity should be reviewed annually.

All works will be specified to ensure the best value for money is achieved with the funding available, balancing the durability of the item, aesthetic value, social value provided by the supplier, and price. This means that sustainably sourced renewable materials are used for items which do not experience a significant amount of wear and tear or can have component parts replaced as and when required. For items which need to be more robust or cannot be replaced easily, metal (usually stainless steel) is most often used. Wood effect recycled plastic is used where having a more natural aesthetic is also important.

## 4.0 AIM & OBJECTIVES

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The aim and objectives of the GAP are as follows:

### **Aim**

To provide a sustainable strategy for the enhancement of biodiversity of Bishop's Park, balanced with maintaining an engaging and inclusive greenspace, offering opportunities for informal exercise and enjoyment of nature.

### **Objectives**

#### **A. To ensure Bishop's Park is a safe and welcoming site for visitors**

- A1 Maintain site entrances to form welcoming, appealing gateways to the site.
- A2 Manage vegetation to maintain visibility across the site and mitigate environmental risks.
- A3 Undertake regular inspections and maintenance of trees, furniture and structures to ensure their condition is maintained.
- A4 Maintain paths, both surfaced and unsurfaced, to a safe and accessible standard.

#### **B. To conserve and enhance the natural environment of Bishop's Park**

- B1 Undertake a structured programme of management to diversify species and age structure of the woodland and improve long-term resilience to disease and climate threats.
- B2 Recognise the value of mature and veteran trees both within woodland and other habitats and provide optimum conditions for longevity.
- B3 Manage the grassland to promote greater diversity of wildflowers and a varied sward structure.
- B4 Maximise the value of hedgerows as commuting, foraging and nesting habitats for wildlife.
- B5 Promote and celebrate the ecological value of habitats within the site.

#### **C. To provide opportunities for the local community to engage with Bishop's Park**

- C1 Engage the local community during development of the GAP.
- C2 Create opportunities for the local community to be involved in the management of the site in a structured and supported way and ensure all

involved are given the opportunity to contribute towards achievement of the GAP objectives.

- C3 Encourage use of the site by a wide range of local user groups.
- C4 Promote responsible and respectful use of Bishop's Park and proactively respond to misuse of the site and anti-social behaviour.
- C5 Promote greater awareness of and interest in the sites through developing engaging and accessible interpretation.

**D. To ensure all management and activities are environmentally and financially sustainable**

- D1 Ensure ongoing management costs are financially sustainable.
- D2 Carry out management according to environmental best practice by minimising the use of pesticides, planning works to limit disturbance to wildlife, and identifying opportunities to enhance biodiversity potential.
- D3 Identify and apply to external funding sources for capital works where available.
- D4 Promote and celebrate voluntary and capital works projects that improve the site.

## 5.0 ACTION PLANS AND MAPS

The following action plans include ongoing management for which budget has been allocated and prospective actions which are subject to funding being secured.

### 5.1 Annual Actions

| Ref no. | Action   | Obj. Ref | When          | Lead      | Delivery    | Funding Stream | Est. Cost      | Spec . ref: | Status |
|---------|--|----------|---------------|-----------|-------------|----------------|----------------|-------------|--------|
| 0.1     | Secure external funding to ensure viability of capital works | D3       | Ongoing       | EHC / CMS | EHC / CMS   | n/a            | n/a            | n/a         |        |
| 0.2     | Inspect and maintain infrastructure                          | A3, A4   | Ongoing       | EHC       | GM contract | GM Budget      | Contract rates | n/a         |        |
| 0.3     | Mow grass paths and cut amenity grass                        | A2, B3   | Every 6 weeks | EHC       | GM contract | GM Budget      | Contract rates | n/a         |        |
| 0.4     | Promote Love Parks Week                                      | C3       | Jun-Aug       | EHC       | EHC         | EHC Budget     | Staff time     | n/a         |        |
| 0.5     | Undertake a tree safety survey and undertake resulting works | A3       | Sep - Feb     | EHC       | EHC         | Tree Budget    | Staff time     | n/a         |        |
| 0.6     | Cut and collect north field, leaving 10% uncut over winter   | B3       | Oct           | EHC       | GM contract | GM budget      | Contract rates | n/a         |        |
| 0.7     | Cut half vegetation in ditches                               | B4       | Oct           | EHC       | GM contract | GM budget      | Contract rates | n/a         |        |
| 0.8     | Cut 1/3 of hedges and margins on rotation                    | A2, B4   | Oct - Feb     | EHC       | GM contract | GM Budget      | Contract rates | n/a         |        |

| Ref no. | Action                                | Obj. Ref | When          | Lead | Delivery    | Funding Stream | Est. Cost      | Spec . ref: | Status |
|---------|---------------------------------------|----------|---------------|------|-------------|----------------|----------------|-------------|--------|
| 0.9     | Remove graffiti and fly tip           | C4       | When required | EHC  | GM contract | GM Budget      | Contract rates | n/a         |        |
| 0.10    | Update EHC and ParksHerts webpages    | C3, D4   | When required | EHC  | EHC         | EHC Budget     | Staff time     | n/a         |        |
| 0.11    | Review and update annual action plans | D1       | Mar           | CMS  | EHC / CMS   | EHC Budget     | Staff time     | n/a         |        |

**Abbreviations:** EHC – East Herts Council; CMS – Countryside Management Service; GM – Grounds Maintenance; Vol – Volunteers.

**Task Responsibility**

|                |                                 |
|----------------|---------------------------------|
| □ District led | } Officer/ Contractor delivered |
| □ CMS led      |                                 |
| □ District led | } Volunteer delivered           |
| □ CMS led      |                                 |

# Bishop's Park

## Greenspace Action Plan

### Annual Action Plan



**Legend**

- Bench
- Dog bin
- ⓘ Interpretation
- Pedestrian gate
- Litter bin
- Tree
- Vehicle gate
- ◆ Lighting
- Hedgerow
- Ditch
- Unsurfaced Path
- Surfaced Path
- Surfaced Path (sealed)
- Line of trees
- Grassland
- Sealed surface
- Broadleaved woodland
- Play area
- Unsealed surface
- Amenity grassland
- Site boundary

- Secure external funding
- Inspect and maintain infrastructure
- Promote Love Parks Week
- Tree safety survey
- Remove graffiti and fly tip
- Update webpages
- Review annual action plans

Scale @ A4  
 1:2,500  
 Date  
 Mar 2026  
 Rev  
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## 5.2 One-off Actions

| Ref no. | Action  | Obj. Ref | When       | Lead      | Delivery  | Funding Stream | Est. Cost      | Spec . ref: | Status |
|---------|---|----------|------------|-----------|-----------|----------------|----------------|-------------|--------|
| 1.1     | Play area improvements                                | C3       | Yr1        | EHC       | EHC       | EHC Budget     | Contract rates | n/a         |        |
| 1.2     | Grassland seeding                                     | B3       | Autumn Yr1 | EHC / CMS | EHC / CMS | EHC Budget     | £1000          | 2           |        |
| 1.3     | Coppice established hazel stools                      | B1, C2   | Winter Yr1 | EHC / CMS | EHC / CMS | EHC Budget     | Vol time       | 3           |        |
| 1.4     | Thin woodlands  | B1       | Winter Yr1 | EHC       | EHC / CMS | EHC Budget     | £5,000         | 3           |        |
| 1.5     | Install grassland interpretation                      | C5       | Yr1        | EHC / CMS | EHC / CMS | EHC Budget     | £1500          | 4           |        |
| 1.6     | Install a 'chatter bench' and accessible picnic bench | C3       | Yr1        | EHC       | EHC / CMS | EHC Budget     | £800           | n/a         |        |
| 1.7     | Replace northeast gate                                | A1       | Yr1        | EHC / CMS | EHC / CMS | EHC Budget     | £900           | n/a         |        |
| 1.8     | Install bike racks                                    | C3       | Yr1        | EHC / CMS | EHC / CMS | EHC Budget     | £200           | n/a         |        |
| 1.9     | Develop and promote walking routes                    | C3       | Yr1        | EHC / CMS | EHC / CMS | TBC            | Staff time     | n/a         |        |
| 1.10    | Update accessibility information on websites          | C3       | Yr1        | EHC       | EHC       | EHC Budget     | Staff time     | n/a         |        |

| Ref no. | Action                         | Obj. Ref | When | Lead      | Delivery  | Funding Stream | Est. Cost  | Spec . ref: | Status |
|---------|--------------------------------|----------|------|-----------|-----------|----------------|------------|-------------|--------|
| 1.11    | Local Wildlife Site assessment | B5       | Yr3  | EHC       | EHC       | EHC Budget     | TBC        | n/a         |        |
| 1.12    | Develop new 5 year GAP         | D1       | Yr 5 | EHC / CMS | EHC / CMS | EHC Budget     | Staff time | n/a         |        |

**Abbreviations:** EHC – East Herts Council; CMS – Countryside Management Service; GM – Grounds Maintenance; Vol – Volunteers;

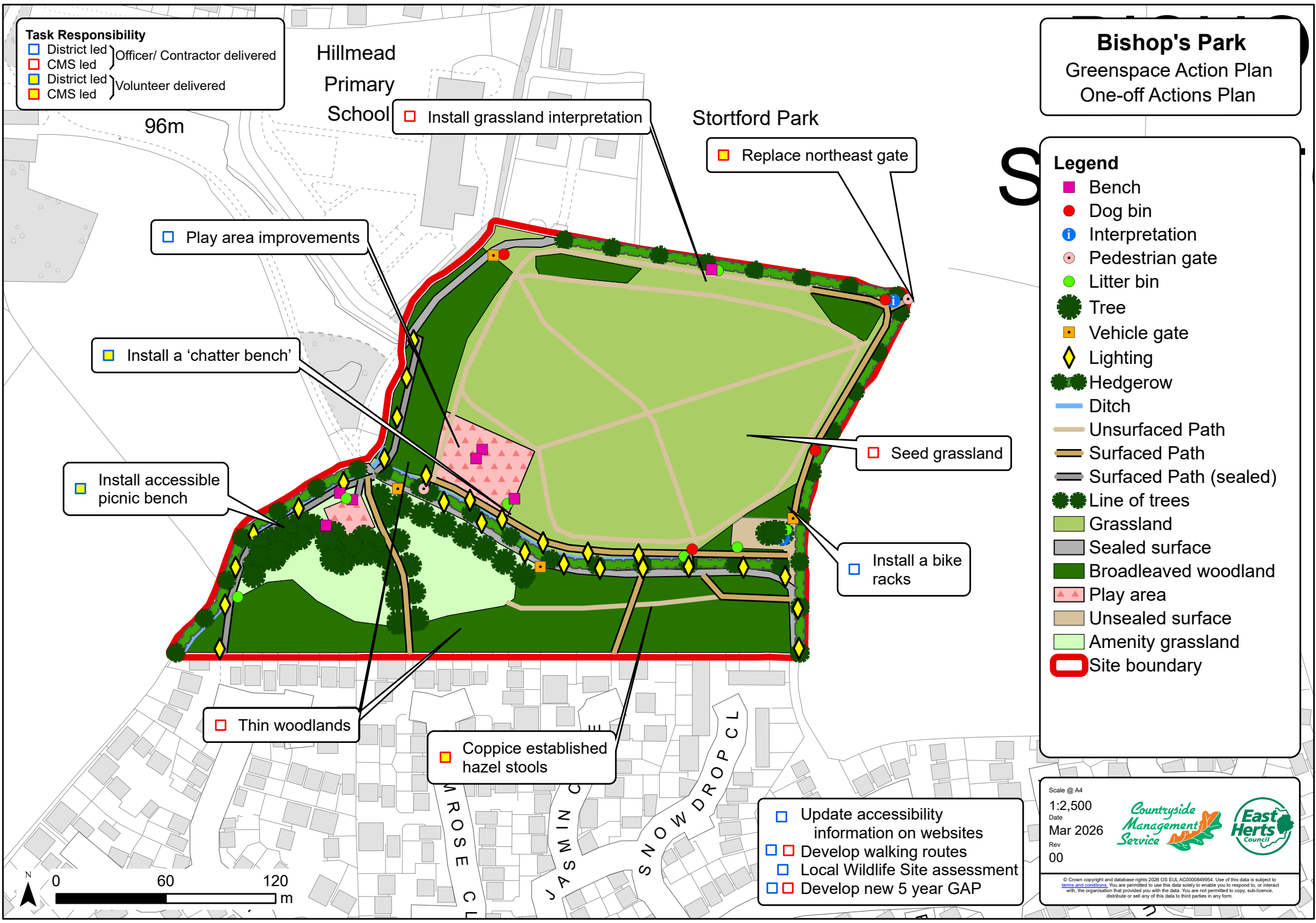
**Task Responsibility**

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

# Bishop's Park

## Greenspace Action Plan

### One-off Actions Plan



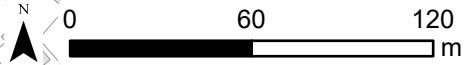
**Legend**

- Bench
- Dog bin
- i Interpretation
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- Litter bin
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- Vehicle gate
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- Ditch
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- Surfaced Path
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- Update accessibility information on websites
- □ Develop walking routes
- Local Wildlife Site assessment
- □ Develop new 5 year GAP



## 6.0 SPECIFICATIONS

| 1.                     | <b>General prescriptions relevant to all works</b>  |
|------------------------|---|
| Public safety          | <p>Members of the public to be kept at a safe distance from works with signs and or banks men. Access routes may require temporary closure.</p> <p>Contractors shall be responsible for safeguarding all materials and plant on site and shall ensure that all such materials and plant in no way or at any time, represent a danger or risk to the general public or authorised persons.</p> <p>Work will be left safe at the end of the day, and any hazards will be protected to prevent public access.</p>  |
| Damage                 | <p>Any and all damage caused by the Contractor to land property or any other permanent features shall be required to be made good by the contractor at their own cost.</p>  |
| Timing                 | <p>Unless otherwise stated, all habitat management work will be undertaken between 1st September and 28th February.</p> <p>All work will aim to be undertaken outside of wettest winter months to minimise damage to soils and tracks.</p>  |
| Vehicles and equipment | <p>Machines and vehicles should not be left to idle and should be turned off to reduce air pollution and noise.</p> <p>Contractors should ensure that all equipment/plant/vehicles entering the work site be clean of all soil and plant material that may have accumulated from work on other sites. This is in order to prevent invasive plant species or other contaminants from being introduced to the site.</p> <p>All refuelling, including chainsaw, is to take place on a specifically designed spill containment device, away from watercourses with fuel spillage kits on site at all times.</p> |
| Waste disposal         | <p>All spoil and cut material should be removed from site and disposed of responsibly and in accordance with current waste legislation, and the site be left tidy.</p>  |

| 2.      | <b>Wildflower seeding and management</b>   |
|---------|--|
| Details | <p>Provenance of wildflower and grass seed should be from the UK to avoid introducing invasive species. The seed mix must have a high diversity i.e. Emorsgate Seeds EM34 Diverse Meadow Mixture.</p> <p>Ground must be scarified and soil loosened to create suitable surface for sowing. Native wildflower (and grass) seed should be surface sown thinly at approximately 4gms of seed per square metre. Damp sand can be mixed with the seed to act as a carrier and identify where seeds have been spread. If the species mix does not contain yellow rattle, which is hemi-parasitic on grasses, yellow rattle seed will be hand sown into the grassland which should reduce the abundance of grasses and promote the establishment of wildflowers. Firm in with a roll, or by treading, to give good soil-seed contact.</p> <p>In the first year of establishment, newly sown meadows should be mown regularly from midsummer to a height of 40-60mm to control annual weeds and help maintain balance between faster growing grasses and slower developing wildflowers.</p> <p>In the second and subsequent years leave plants from spring through to midsummer to flower. After flowering in July or August take a 'hay cut' can be made to c 50mm. Leave the 'hay' to dry and shed seed for 1-7 days then remove from site. This can be followed with autumn and early spring mowing to 50mm depending on growth rate. In exceptionally hot and dry summers, the hay cut can be carried out earlier in July to manage fire risk.</p> <p>For established hedgerow wildflower margins, areas within 2m of the hedge or woodland boundary can be left uncut in most years, cutting on rotation every 2-3 years. Areas that are further from the margin and more open can be managed as grassland habitat.</p> <p>Hedgerow vegetation that is not mown or grazed each year will become rough and "tussocky" in character over time, this can form a useful refuge habitat. If it develops into scrub or bramble, it should only be cut between October and February.</p> |
| Timing  | <p>For best establishment, wildflower seeding should be undertaken in the autumn, ideally October, before the first frost.</p> <p>Cutting should take place in early spring, late summer and autumn.</p>   |

| 3.      | <b>Woodland thinning</b>  |
|---------|---|
| Details | <p>Any thinning works will further the aim of reducing coverage of non-native species (e.g. sycamore) and encouraging natural growth/ regeneration of native species.</p> <p>Arisings to be disposed of appropriately through small amounts of deadwood stacking or removal off-site.</p> <p>Opportunities for deadwood creation should be realised through thinning works.</p> <p>Halo-thinning around crowded ‘feature’ trees will provide improved environmental conditions. Halo to be no larger in radius than half-height of feature tree.</p> <p>Coppice stools should be cut at an angle close to the base.</p> <p>This site has the potential to support nesting birds and bats. Works to trees, scrub and hedges should be conducted outside of the breeding season. A survey of potential bat roosts should be carried out prior to the commencement of works. Should the contractor come across any evidence of bats (or any other protected species) then they should stop work immediately.</p> |
| Timing  | <p>Tree works requiring mechanised techniques and/ or vehicles to be undertaken in autumn, to avoid worst weather conditions.</p> <p>Lighter work involving volunteers can be undertaken at any stage between September and February.</p>   |

| 4.      | <b>Interpretation</b>  |
|---------|--|
| Details | <p>Design to follow the East Herts Council house style and incorporate illustrative elements to convey important information and key features of interest.</p> <p>Plain text version with alternative text for images to be produced for publication online.</p> <p>Lectern frame with powdered steel surround and twin leg, incorporating a graffiti, scratch and flame resistant GRP panel displayed at a suitable height and angle to be easily visible to children and wheelchair users as well as the general adult public.</p> |
| Timing  | <p>Installation will aim to be undertaken outside of wettest winter months to minimise damage to soils and tracks.</p>   |

## 7.0 APPENDICES

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### 7.1 Engagement Summary

#### 7.1.1 Introduction

A period of public engagement accompanies the production of this management plan, enabling the local community and stakeholders to inform management of the site. All user groups with an interest in the site are aimed to be included in this process, and for their requirements to be considered as part of the planning process. The table below summarises comments received and any amendments made to the plan as a result.

#### 7.1.2 Engagement Feedback

[To be inserted on completion of engagement]

### 7.2 Policy Context

#### 7.2.1 East Herts Council Strategies

##### 7.2.1.1 Climate Change Strategy 2022-2026

In July 2019, East Herts Council unanimously approved a Climate Change Declaration in recognition of the climate emergency and committed to address the causes and impacts of climate change across the district. The strategy outlines how East Herts Council will become a net-zero carbon council by 2030 and influence others to promote behavioural change. Initiatives proposed are wide ranging and include:

- Supporting active travel,
- Improving public awareness of climate change, and
- Supporting community projects such as tree planting and projects facilitating sustainable lifestyle.

Priorities and proposals within this strategy are intended to dovetail with those in the county council's Sustainable Hertfordshire Strategy (see section 7.2.2.1 below).

##### 7.2.1.2 Parks & Open Spaces Strategy (2022-2027)

The Parks & Open Spaces Strategy sets out East Hertfordshire Council's vision for maintaining, enhancing, and ensuring accessibility to green spaces while balancing heritage conservation, biodiversity, community engagement, and financial sustainability. The strategy highlights the importance of parks in supporting health

and wellbeing, climate resilience, and cultural activity, emphasising their economic, environmental, and social value.

Key policies & objectives relevant to the project:

- **Health and wellbeing through green spaces** - recognises parks as central to public health, encouraging community events, outdoor fitness activities, and mental wellbeing programs.
- **Accessibility and community engagement** - commits to ensuring parks and open spaces are inclusive and accessible for all users, particularly those with disabilities.
- **Economic and commercial sustainability** - aims to develop sustainable income streams for open spaces through event hosting, vendor partnerships, and commercial hire of park facilities.

## ***7.2.2 Hertfordshire County Council Strategies***

### *7.2.2.1 Sustainable Hertfordshire Strategy*

Hertfordshire County Council declared a climate emergency in July 2019 and have since committed to make Hertfordshire cleaner, greener and more sustainable.

HCC want to:

1. Lead in their own operations
2. Enable sustainability with their programmes, policies and decisions
3. Inspire businesses and residents to take action

The ambitions of the [Sustainable Hertfordshire Strategy](#) include achieving net zero greenhouse gas emissions before 2050, ensuring communities are ready for future climates and increase biodiversity in Hertfordshire's land and water by 20% by 2050.

### *7.2.2.2 Tree and Woodland Strategy (2022-30)*

The Tree and Woodland Strategy sets out ambitions for Hertfordshire's treescapes until 2030:

- Supporting the establishment of at least 1.8 million new trees across Hertfordshire, including at least 1.2 million trees, one for every resident of Hertfordshire, and at least 100km of hedgerows, equating to 600,000 hedgerow trees.
- Promoting and supporting the development of woodland management plans to help ensure woodlands provide a range of benefits to their owners, wildlife and local communities, while remaining resilient to pressures on tree health.
- Facilitating and enabling residents and businesses to support tree and woodland establishment and enhancement initiatives in Hertfordshire.

### 7.2.2.3 *Local Nature Recovery Strategy*

The Hertfordshire Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS) is one of 48 strategies which collectively cover the whole of England. Each local nature recovery strategy is specific and tailored to its area.

Our LNRS was developed by the Hertfordshire Nature Recovery Partnership, which is formed of partners across public, private and voluntary sectors. The strategy works in conjunction with a wide range of local strategies to ensure the aims for nature are consistent with other countywide goals.

The LNRS can be viewed at [Local Nature Recovery Strategy | Hertfordshire County Council](#) and contains 2 key parts:

- A local habitat map.
- A written statement of biodiversity priorities.

The strategy and map provide a framework which can be used by everyone to help nature recover and which will help drive investment and action for nature across Hertfordshire. The map shows the key areas for nature in Hertfordshire and the areas where actions would have the most positive impact. The written statement sets clear targets, priorities and actions to support habitats and species and combat the pressures facing habitats across the county.