



people spaces places



Tunbridge Wells Cemetery

Management and Development Plan

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Tunbridge Wells Cemetery

Management and Development Plan

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1 Introduction

1.1 Intent / Concept

This Management & Development Plan has been produced following a process of research, survey work and consultation, which is summarised later in this document.

Overall this Plan is designed to provide the basis for managing, maintaining and developing the cemetery for the next 10 years. We anticipate the Plan will be revised and updated throughout this period in line with the delivery of capital improvements, management arrangements and community aspirations. Although the Plan period is suggested at 10 years, many of its recommendations will leave a much longer legacy, and it is proposed that future revisions of the plan will allow its continued application over a longer timeframe.

In producing the Plan we seek to bring together the management, maintenance and development of the cemetery into an overall framework. Our Plan is intended to be both a working document and a reference document. A working document in that it contains actions and timetables that we will need to implement and review and as a reference document in that the Plan does not contain every piece of information needed to run the cemetery – it provides references to other documents, policies and strategies and explores their implications for the cemetery. As such, our Plan has to be read in conjunction with these documents in order for us to manage, maintain and develop the cemetery.

This Management & Development Plan has been produced with the ambition that it is a readable and accessible document, and follows guidance produced by Heritage Lottery Fund and the former CABA Space. The plan is laid out under 4 sections:

Section A - Where are we now? – here the Plan describes the current situation of the cemetery – what it is, who manages it, its history to date, what is known about the cemetery, what policy and procedures govern the way it is and can be managed, where it is located, what is known about current users and the surrounding community.

Section B - Where do we want to get to? – here the Plan takes a step back to assess the significance of the cemetery, what issues are to be addressed, what improvements are needed both to the site itself and the way it is managed. This section also develops aims and objectives that can then be translated into actions in the next section.

Section C - How will we get there? – here the Plan sets out what actions need to be taken to deliver change, it also sets out proposals for new management and maintenance arrangements as well as considering the financial and resource implications of the actions.

Section D - How will we know when we have arrived? – Here the Plan sets out some proposals for monitoring and review and some suggested measures of success.

This Management & Development Plan has been produced at the request of Tunbridge Wells Borough Council and the Friends of Tunbridge Wells Cemetery, who have generously contributed to the cost of its production. The Plan has been produced as a framework for the next 10 years.

The Management & Development Plan will be monitored and reviewed on a regular basis with the progress against the action plan reviewed quarterly, the overall Plan on an annual basis and updated after 10 years. The Friends of Tunbridge Wells Cemetery and other stakeholders will be involved in the review and updating process stages. An Amendment Sheet at the start of the Plan allows changes and updates to be recorded and tracked.

An annual review document will be produced and made available to all stakeholders detailing the achievements made in line with the proposals within the management plan. The action plan is structured so that progress against each action can be recorded on a regular basis.

Further details are set out in Section D under Monitoring and Review.

1.2 Audiences

It is intended that this Management & Development Plan is a tool to advise, assist and inform Elected Members, Council Officers, the Friends of Tunbridge Wells Cemetery, funding bodies and other interested parties and stakeholders on how the valued asset is to be managed and maintained. The Plan has also been produced in a format to support applications to the Green Flag Award and other award schemes.

1.3 Need

The brief for this work was agreed with the Council in May 2017 and aims to cover management, maintenance and development projects to be delivered in partnership with the Friends of Tunbridge Wells Cemetery. In addition, the Friends Group has set out its aspirations for the content of the

Management & Development Plan and this will be considered in the development of the Plan. The need for this Plan has been driven by the following factors;

- The need to identify overall improvements in the cemetery in line with customer expectations
- The need to set out a vision for the cemetery and a develop a single framework that all service delivery and partner organisations can work together to deliver
- The need to balance the commercial requirements of an operational crematorium and burial ground with the sensitive conservation of the site's unique built and natural environment and cultural heritage
- The need to provide high standards of service delivery at a time of reducing resources

1.4 Management Plan Preparation

The Plan has been brought together by consultants with valuable input from Council staff and key stakeholders. The following people have been involved:

Council Staff

Peter Every Parks and Sports Team Leader

Ken Dry Cemetery Registrar

Friends of Tunbridge Wells Cemetery

Lorna Blackmore Chair

June Bridgeman Secretary

Consultant Team – CFP

Adrian Spray Principal Consultant

Rupert Dugdale Associate Consultant

Emily Keenan Consultant

Section A – Where Are We Now?

2 Introduction

This section of the Plan describes the context of Tunbridge Wells Cemetery with respect to its location, the details of the cemetery, its history, facilities and features, then the community context, with particular focus on activities carried out by the Friends of Tunbridge Wells Cemetery. Consideration is given to the designations and legal aspects affecting the cemetery and a short description of the historical development is set out. Finally, a summary of relevant policies and strategies, which are of direct relevance to the Cemetery, is included.

Tunbridge Wells is a large town in western Kent, about 40 miles south-east of central London. The town is close to the border of the county of East Sussex and is situated at the northern edge of the High Weald. The town came into being as a spa in the Restoration and had its heyday as a tourist resort under Beau Nash when the Pantiles and its chalybeate spring attracted visitors who wished to take the waters. Though its popularity waned with the advent of sea bathing, the town remains popular and derives some 30 per cent of its income from the tourist industry.

The town has a population of around 56,500 and is the administrative centre of Tunbridge Wells Borough and the UK parliamentary constituency of Tunbridge Wells.

2.1 Demographics

The Crematorium and Cemetery has a catchment that is influenced by parish, geography and familial associations, and which will change over time due to variations in the bereavement market. Given these variations, demographic data has been captured from the 2011 census for Tunbridge Wells Borough and compared to South East England as an indicator of local demographic character.

	Tunbridge Wells Borough	South East England
Gender		
Male	49.1%	49.1%
Female	50.9%	50.9%
Age profile		

15 or under	20.5%	19.0%
26 – 24	9.7%	11.2%
25 – 34	12.0%	12.4%
35 – 44	15.0%	14.2%
45 – 64	26.2%	26.1%
65 or over	16.6%	17.2%
Ethnicity		
White	94.9%	90.7%
Other ethnic groups	5.1%	9.3%
Long term limiting illness	14.2%	15.7%

At a high level, this indicates that the gender balance is consistent with the regional average, and that the population of the Borough is broadly younger and healthier than the regional average but has much less ethnic diversity.

2.2 Site Description & Character Zones

The cemetery, originally known as the New Cemetery at Frant Forest, is located on the southern side of Royal Tunbridge Wells, Kent and between the B2169 Bayham Road and Benhall Mill Road. The cemetery is gently sloping with a southerly aspect and has tranquil, filtered views to the open countryside to the south and east. It lies just under 2 miles by road from the Town Centre, and is served by a bus route run by two operators. The cemetery is surrounded by physical barriers of roads and walls except for the southern boundary which borders Hawkenbury sports pitches which is demarcated by a tall coniferous hedge.

The 'New Cemetery at Hawkenbury' was opened in 1873 in response to limited space in local churches and the Woodbury Park Cemetery. The crematorium was opened in 1958 and serves a large area of West Kent and north-eastern parts of East Sussex accommodating some 2430 cremations per year and achieving gross income of circa £1.24M per annum. The cemetery accommodates circa 110 burials per year achieving a gross income of £75k per annum. Two thirds of the site is consecrated with the remainder under general provision. With sufficient burial space in reserve at hand, relatively low

numbers of burials taking place and the potential of the continuation of the practice of adding later burials to much earlier unpurchased graves that have remaining space, future burial capacity is not considered a major or critical issue at present.

Figure 1 shows the location of the cemetery, Figure 2 shows the overall layout of the cemetery and the location of key features and facilities and Figure 3 is an aerial photograph. Figure 4 shows the extension of the Cemetery and Crematorium over time. Figure 5 shows the immediately obvious character areas of the site which are further described below.

Figure 1 Cemetery location

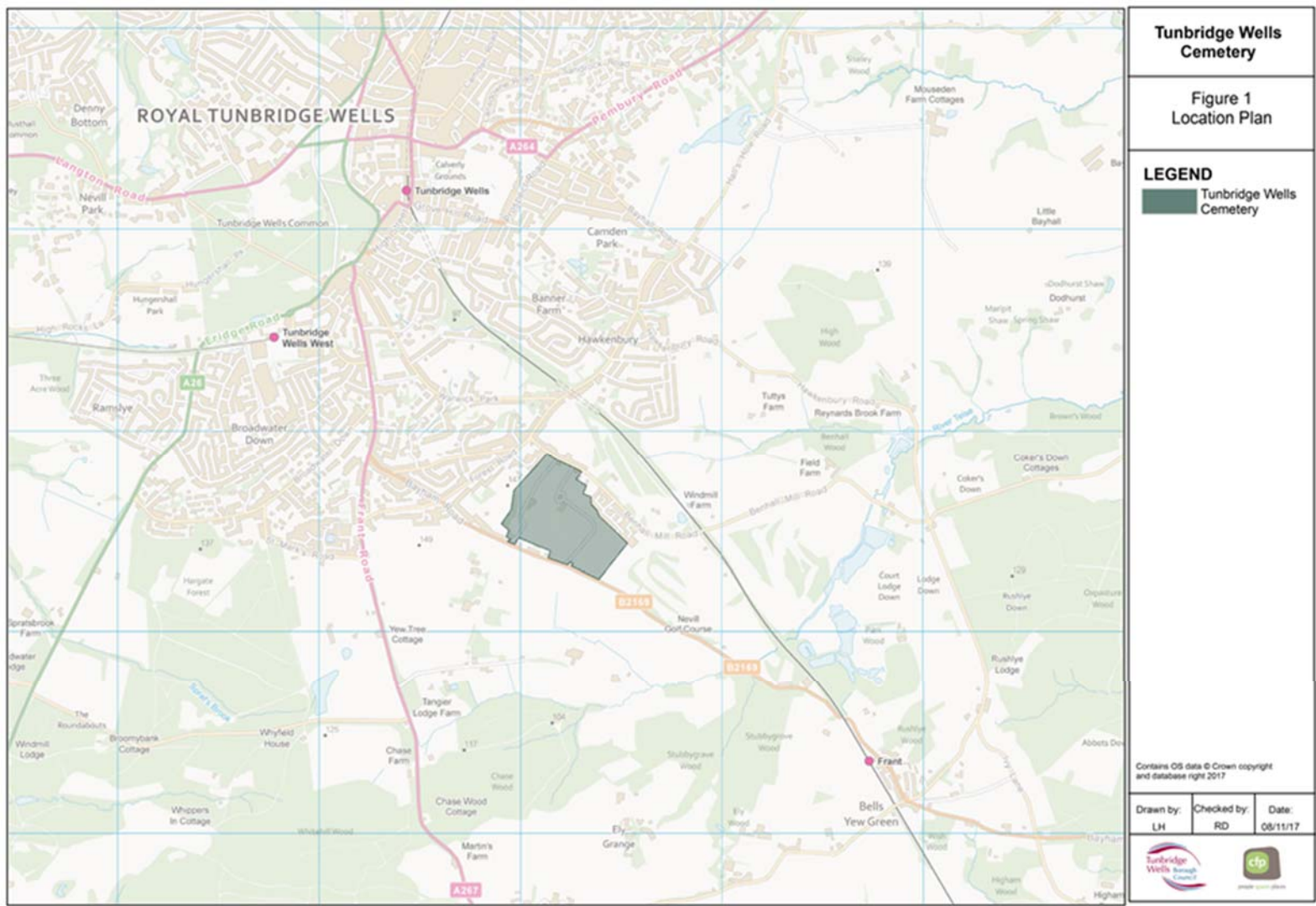


Figure 2 Cemetery layout



Figure 3 Aerial image



Figure 4 Phases of development of the Cemetery and Crematorium



Figure 5 Character Areas



The site consists of the Kent and Sussex Crematorium and the Tunbridge Wells Cemetery and it possesses a number of distinct character areas. Photographs which indicate the character of each area are included.

Crematorium Grounds

The Crematorium Grounds are approached by the main entrances from Benhall Mill Road and Bayham Road and contain the Lawn of Remembrance, Upper Rose Garden, Memorial Path, Children's Memorial Garden, Sands Memorial and Lower Rose Garden. This area is characterised by the following;

- A contemporary, municipal landscape of standard trees, herbaceous and shrub planting, close mown grass and modern street furniture with a range of construction materials
- A strong sense of containment created by boundary walls and vegetation with barely any views from the site
- a series of compartmentalised and distinctive named spaces with a sense of privacy

A series of tarmacadam and in places concrete paths links these distinct areas and bins, seating and signage are located in appropriate positions. The Crematorium Offices, located at the Benhall Mill Road entrance, are located in this zone.





Crematorium complex

Adjoining the grounds are the Crematorium and Chapel, Cloister Garden, Book of Remembrance Room and the main and additional car parking areas. The main tarmacadam drive passes through this zone and this is lit, as is the car park.



Cemetery Grounds

The largest part of the site contains a range of historic and modern graves laid out around the dominant architectural feature, the sandstone chapels on its highest point. The chapels form the axis of two majestic avenues. The grounds contain ample space for a significant number of future burials. They are characterised by

- a more open aspect
- an ordered grid of graves
- several thousand memorials, some of high artistic merit, in marble, granite, sandstone and limestone
- a hierarchy of tarmacadam paths with provision for parking
- a network of main and ancillary grass paths which offer traffic free and tranquil routes and settings for memorials and vistas
- original buildings and walls in local sandstone with later additions in brick and concrete, paving materials primarily tarmacadam, rolled stone, with some natural stone flag paving a range of tree species and ages with a striking dominance of coniferous species
- a variety of grassland types from the formal and closely mown and level to informal, undulating and longer grass
- a species rich grassland flora with a distinctive community of fungi
- limited but attractive glimpses to the High Weald landscape to the south east

The Cemetery is divided into sections for Consecrated (C of E) Non-Consecrated (non conformist Baptists, Methodists, Congregationalists, Quakers etc or no religion), Roman Catholic and Muslim burials, and contains areas for War Graves (maintained by the War Graves Commission), WW1 and WW2 Crosses of Sacrifice and the Primrose Gardens (cremated remains). Although infant graves are located throughout the Cemetery, there is a dedicated area of children's graves adjacent to the north eastern boundary wall. This area also contains historic boundary walls and bins, seating and signage are located in appropriate positions.



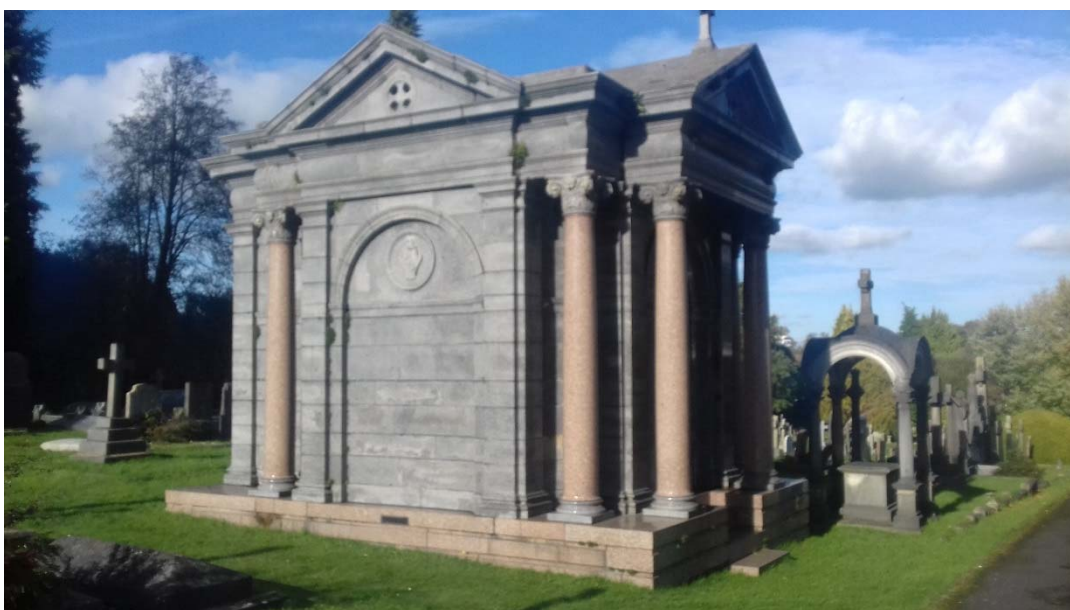




The Chapel Cloister

Part of the Cemetery Grounds, but with its own distinct character at the highest point of the original cemetery, this area is characterised by;

- the grave plots being larger and more expensive than those lower down the hill
- the monuments more elaborate and the inscriptions more explicit in their reference to the rank and property of those commemorated
- containing historic and in places grandiose monuments
- a strong sense of containment created by the walled and vegetated boundary to the west and the dense coniferous tree cover to the east and south
- a collection of mature trees consisting almost entirely of coniferous and evergreen species
- a network of main and ancillary grass paths which offer traffic free and tranquil routes and settings for memorials and vistas



Proposed Crematorium extension

In addition to the above, and currently outside of the Cemetery and Crematorium operation, there is an area of sports pitches demarcated by fencing and a tall coniferous fence. For the purposes of this Plan, no assessment of character has been carried out on this area

Green infrastructure

Notwithstanding the Cemetery's primary purpose, it is used not only by residents drawn by its ecology, history and distinctive sense of place, but also by walkers and joggers, and as such it makes an important contribution to the area's green infrastructure. It also has a significant social, cultural and educational role through the activities and events organised by the Friends Group.

Site ecology

Part of the site has been designated as Local Wildlife site TW58 in the Tunbridge Wells Local Biodiversity Action Plan (TWLBAP) as a Lowland Acid Grassland site. This habitat is a priority habitat type in the UK Biodiversity Action Plan. The extent of this designation is shown on Figure 4 below.

Figure 6 Extent of Local Wildlife site TW58



The Kent High Weald Partnership was engaged by Tunbridge Wells Borough Council and the Kent Partnership via the Kent Biodiversity Partnership to review the conservation management of the Cemetery and prepared a report setting out management recommendations in August 2010, with a subsequent revision in 2016. The report was based on numerous fungal surveys carried out since 2002 and, in the absence of a detailed ecological survey, species data from a number of surveys carried out over previous years.

The site is important for its grassland fungi populations, especially waxcaps which due to the continued loss of unimproved grassland habitats have become more restricted in their distribution. The waxcap grassland community at the cemetery is made up of waxcaps, pink gills, earth tongues and club fungi and on the basis of the 2015 survey, the report considers that the cemetery is of international importance.

The report also noted the presence of another important species, the Green-winged Orchid, which although is widespread in the UK, is county scarce for Kent. This is a plant of unimproved dry grassland and which flowers in May and June. As many as 60 plants were identified in the war graves section of the cemetery and scattered individuals elsewhere.

The report made site management recommendations in order to maintain the optimum conditions for the large variety of fungi on the site and other grassland species, recognising that the best management regime for one grassland community or species may be at the expense of others.

The report also made recommendations on the management of the wider crematorium grounds beyond the LWS designation; on the commissioning of further surveys for fungi, lichen, birds and bats; and on the opportunity for events and interpretation based on the site's ecology.

A tree survey of the site undertaken in 2011 records the species, age, height, condition (including recent work), proposed work and priority of 656 specimens. A plan showing the locations of these is included in Appendix D.

In recent years badgers have been active in the Cemetery and have undermined a number of memorials there as well as a stretch of tarmac path. In addition, the Kent Wildlife Trust and the Bat Conservation Trust have advised of the adverse impact that outdoor lighting can have on bat activity, and in recent years the Cemetery has seen introduction of grave lighting never envisaged in past cemetery regulations.

Legal Issues and Designations

2.2.1 Ownership and Covenants

The site is entirely in the ownership of Tunbridge Wells Council. Two of the historic lodges on the periphery of the site have been sold off and a third is let as a residential property by the Council's property company Tunbridge Wells Property Holdings Limited.

2.2.2 Leases and Licences

The southern wing of the Cemetery Chapel is let to the Friends of the Cemetery on a 2 year licence.

2.2.3 Designations

The Twin Mortuary Chapels are Grade II listed (List Entry Number: 1281729). The list entry, which is included in Appendix B is as follows;

BENHALL MILL ROAD 1746 (South East Side) Mortuary Chapel to Tunbridge Wells Cemetery TQ 53 NE 10/108 II 2. Later C19 built of Tunbridge Wells ashlar. This consists of a central stone tower with spire above and carriage archway below flanked by 2 chapels having traceried windows, buttresses and tiled roofs.

No trees are subject to Tree Preservation Orders, however there are a number subject to TPOs in gardens adjoining the north east and north west boundaries.

2.3 Historical Context

The 'New Cemetery at Frant Forest' was opened in 1873 at a cost of £4,000 by the Local Board of Commissioners, in response to limited space in local churches and the Woodbury Park Cemetery. After considering a number of options for location of the cemetery, 20 acres of land in the former Frant Forest were acquired from Lord Abergavenny. An advertisement in 'The Builder' invited designs for layout, chapels and lodges from architects and landscape designers. Prizes ranging from 2 to 10 guineas were offered and an architect appointed however problems arose when the selected building contractor went bankrupt. Finding a successor led to delays and increased costs and an advisor was also needed to lay out the paths and plots for which the Board turned to the Town Surveyor William Brentnall, who came up with a formal grid layout which was very different from the graceful curves at Woodbury Park. In addition to the delays caused by finding an alternative contractor, works to laying out the Cemetery were delayed due to the surveyor's staff being diverted to deal with a water crisis elsewhere in the town and the

Just as the cemetery was divided into consecrated and unconsecrated sections, so too were separate but linked chapels provided for Anglicans and non-conformists. Today burial services take place in what was the Anglican chapel. The architect for these twin chapels and other structures was Edward William Stephens from Maidstone and their builder Hope Constable of Penshurst. The design provides a sheltered porte cochere between the two buildings for horse-drawn hearses, while the wide surrounding carriage sweep allowed dignified access and waiting space for the processions of mourners' vehicles that would have accompanied most of the burials here.

PLAN
of the Proposed
CEMETERY GROUND
TRANT FOREST
TUNBRIDGE WELLS.

Compass rose showing North (N), South (S), East (E), and West (W).

Legend:
Consecrated Ground 0. 8. 4
Unconsecrated do 7. 0. 4
Scale 20. 0. 0

Map labels:
From Trant Road
From Forest
The Earl of Abergrenny
ANNAGRENNY
THE EARL OF ABERGRENNY
R. Baskell Mill
R. Bellows Green

Handwritten note:
16. 17 Feb. cap. 184
I sanction the Division of the Tunbridge Wells new Cemetery, at Trant Forest, into consecrated and unconsecrated portions, as marked on this Plan, — the consecrated ground being tinted pink, and the unconsecrated ground being tinted blue. —
Whitehall } R. Lowe
26th August 1873 } one of Her Majesty's Principal Secretaries of State

Scale of Chances
Scale of Feet

Printed at the end of the map: HATCHER & CO. LONDON

Figure 8 Extract from historic plot layout



The cemetery contains a fine assemblage of monuments, especially in that part to the north west occupied by the more affluent and genteel; Soldiers, adventurers, engineers, public servants, merchants, clergymen, lawyers, and physicians. These have been subject to significant research by the Friends of the Cemetery and the publication of guide books.

The Cemetery has subsequently been extended from the original 20 acres to the current 26 acres and the Crematorium was opened in December 1958. The Crematorium has subsequently benefited from a number of improvements including replacement cremators in 1994, and a major £1.4m replacement of the cremators in 2014 to provide new emissions monitoring and filtration equipment and new catafalque and curtains.

2.4 Policy Context

Council Five Year Plan

The key corporate plan for the Council is its Five Year Plan 2017-2022. The Corporate Priorities set out in this document are;

- A prosperous borough
- A well borough
- An inclusive borough

The Council has developed a 'Strategic Compass' that brings together its Corporate Priorities, proposals to improve services for residents and customers, its commitments to and expectations of its people and providing value. The activities and services covered by this Management Plan which contribute to this model include;

- Enhancing parks and open spaces
- Enabling empowered communities
- Enabling the delivery of community facilities
- Working with the best-placed partners
- Make money, save money, improve processes



Sports and Active Recreation Strategy 2016 – 2021

This Strategy sets out the Council's aims, objectives and priorities for developing sports opportunities and facilities in the borough, and using sport and active recreation to develop and promote healthy lifestyles. It provides a framework for the development of sport activities, facilities and services in the borough of Tunbridge Wells over the next five years and enables the Council to work towards an agreed set of actions to help deliver the current Five Year Plan and corporate priorities. The strategy recognises the value of open space in developing a sense of community by pulling together local groups and organisations and providing opportunities for residents and communities to take ownership of and make best use of their parks and open spaces, contributing to overall well-being, as well as its role in creating opportunities for informal recreation

Bereavement Services Business Plan 2013 – 2018

This Business Plan, prepared by and for the use of Council Officers and Members, provides key information surrounding the context and provision of the Bereavement Service operated by the Council and sets out a series of Service Objectives in an action plan. For the purposes of this Management Plan, the

Service Plan contains some very valuable information on market trends and service demands. It includes a mission statement for '*A Bereavement Service of Quality, Sensitivity and Compassion for all*'

Key information from the Business Plan relating to service demands and specific actions relating to the content of this Management Plan are set out in Section 2.14 Service Context.

Tunbridge Wells Borough Local Plan – Local Development Scheme

The Council's Local Development Scheme (LDS) sets out details of the planning policy documents that the Council has completed, is currently drafting and those it intends to prepare. The LDS is intended to provide information to interested parties to help them participate in the plan-making process. This LDS came into effect on 15 April 2016 and updates and replaces the LDS approved on 01 March 2015.

Key Development Plan Documents and Supplementary Planning Documents which may apply to this Management Plan include;

- Core Strategy (Adopted 2010)
- Local Plan (Adopted 2006 and new Local Plan due for adoption January 2020)
- Local Heritage Assets SPD (Adopted June 2012)
- Green Infrastructure Plan SPD (Adopted May 2014)

Local Plan

The Local Plan is a locally-based land use document. It looks ahead ten years and makes provision for both change and the conservation of the best features of the locality in general conformity with the Kent Structure Plan 1996 and the Kent & Medway Structure Plan 2006. It sets out the Local Planning Authority's policies for the control of development, makes proposals for the development and use of land and allocates land for specific purposes. Aims and policies of direct relevance to the Cemetery include the protection and enhancement of the built, historic and natural environment; protection of native species and their habitats; protection of trees and vegetation which give landscape character;

Local Heritage Assets SPD

This Supplementary Planning Document sets out the criteria and process for nominating additions to the List of Local Heritage Assets (LHAs). These are resources that, although not considered significant enough for statutory protection, are of importance to the local community. Within the Borough there are currently

almost 3,000 statutory listed buildings and structures, which enjoy protection at a national level. In addition to these nationally listed assets, there are also local features which have significance within the communities in which they are located which LHA listing assists in recognising and protecting. The SPD provides guidance on the criteria by which specific heritage assets will be identified, the process of their inclusion on the local list, their status and how they will be dealt with. It is intended principally for applicants and their agents, allowing identified LHAs to be taken into account at an early stage of development. Planning officers will also be aware of LHA lists, considering these assets as material evidence when determining applications

Green Infrastructure Plan SPD

The National Planning Policy Framework (2012) defines green infrastructure as "a network of multi-functional green space, urban and rural, which is capable of delivering a wide range of environmental and quality of life benefits for local communities". The positive contribution that green infrastructure makes to creating sustainable communities and tackling climate change is becoming increasingly important in the context of balancing housing growth with environmental preservation, and is gaining widespread recognition in spatial planning policy. The SPD sets out a clear vision and framework for existing and future green infrastructure: setting out the current provision of green infrastructure assets; identifying areas where there are gaps in provision or linkages; and identifying potential opportunities for enhancing and filling these gaps. The role of sites such as Tunbridge Wells Cemetery is recognised in the accepted Green Infrastructure Typology of Allotments *and community gardens, cemeteries and churchyards*.

The GI Plan, which inherits the principles set out in the South East Green Infrastructure Framework (2009), sets out a clear vision and framework for existing and future green infrastructure: setting out the current provision of green infrastructure assets; identifying areas where there are gaps in provision or linkages; and identifying potential opportunities for enhancing and filling these gaps.

Tunbridge Wells Local Biodiversity Action Plan (2008)

In response to the UK Biodiversity Action Plan first published by national government in 1994, the Tunbridge Wells Borough Biodiversity Action Plan was produced in response to the need to promote and carry out positive action for the conservation and enhancement of local biodiversity. The Plan contains individual habitat and species action plans to help safeguard the borough's biodiversity. Nationally threatened habitats and species that occur in Tunbridge Wells borough are included with action plans for species and habitats of local significance.

The plan includes Lowland Acid Grassland as one of six priority habitats, given that it has suffered severe decline with what remains being of national significance with Kent now only having 0.2% of acid grassland remaining, and makes specific reference to its presence at the Cemetery.

Kent Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2014-17

This strategy sets out the overarching direction for the NHS, social care and public health services in Kent. It also describes how partners will work together to improve people's health and reduce the health inequalities that exist in the county. The Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy is published by the Kent Health and Wellbeing Board on behalf of all local authorities and NHS Clinical Commissioning Groups in Kent. The strategy seeks to promote a 'Whole population' approach that inspires citizens to take a much more active part in their immediate and long term health and wellbeing, and recognises the role that parks and green spaces provide for improving physical activity and helping people feel connected with the environment that they live in.

Friends of Tunbridge Wells Cemetery Objects and Strategic Plan

The Friends Constitution sets out the following objects for their work:

- (i) having full regard to its function as a working burial ground, to further the protection, conservation and sympathetic enhancement of the Cemetery for public benefit and enjoyment;
- (ii) to record and to foster its heritage of monuments and its ecological importance;
- (iii) to foster its appropriate use as an educational resource for the community

In December 2015 the Friends Group adopted a Strategic Plan for the period 2015-17. The Plan, which aims to structure and guide the activities of the Group contains 6 priority areas as below;

1. Improving long term strategic planning of the site
2. Promoting and carrying out selected projects
3. Improving communications
4. Developing contacts with stakeholders

5. Monitoring the contractors to encourage better maintenance standards
6. Increasing membership of the Friends Group

The plan sets out a series of proposals for the implementation of these priorities, which are reviewed and rolled forward annually. The first annual review was undertaken and summarised in a discussion paper dated the 14 November 2016. The recent review and roll forward to 2020 of the strategic plan noted the limitations on Friends resources and reaffirmed as paramount its objectives of conservation, enhancement, memorial recording and education

2.5 Organisational Context

The Cemetery and Crematorium is run by the Council's Bereavement Services, which forms part of the Contract Unit in Environment and Street Scene. The Contract Unit comprises Bereavement Services, Waste and Street Scene and Parks and Sports. Figure 8 shows the organisational structure for Bereavement Services.

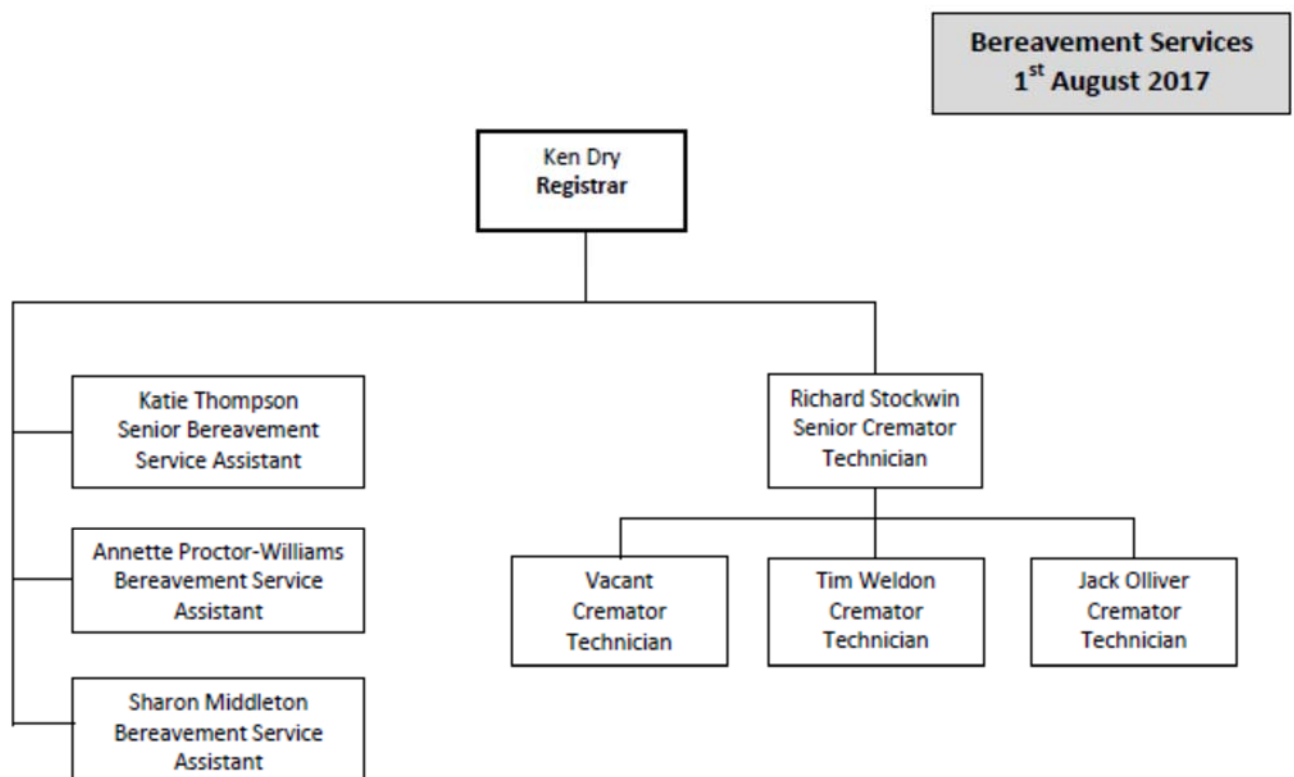


Figure 9 Service Structure

The Grounds Maintenance of the Cemetery is carried out by Sodexo under a Borough wide contract running from January 2011 to December 2021. The quantitative elements of this service are covered by bills of quantity which are shown in Appendix A and the scope of the contract covers maintenance of;

- Grass
- Shrub beds
- Rose beds
- Hedges
- Water features
- Paths and hard surfaces
- Litter picking and bins
- Furniture

In addition, the contract provides a gravedigging, burial and exhumation service and cleaning of chapel and associated facilities, including toilets.

The qualitative element of the service is covered by a service specification and this is shown in Appendix C. The specification sets out customer care, safety and security matters as well as the quality standards of the maintenance tasks covered. Delivery of the contract requirements is monitored via monthly review meetings between the Council's Supervising Officer and the Contractor's Contract Manager.

The War Graves section of the Cemetery is maintained directly by the War Graves Commission, whose contractor is responsible for the maintenance of the grass, roses and herbaceous planting in this area.

In addition, the Friends Group carry out some ad hoc maintenance on a voluntary basis, and their work has included, inspection and reporting of issues relating to memorials, weeding, tidy up days and maintenance of the Children's area under the supervision of the Council's Parks Service.

2.6 Current Management Arrangements

Risk Assessment

The Cemetery is maintained to the safest and healthiest condition as is reasonably practicable.

All health and safety is guided through the Council's and Sodexo's Health and Safety policies which ensure that as far as reasonably practicable, the health and safety of all employees, visitors and contractors is catered for at all times.

Risk assessments are undertaken by both organisations, dependant on responsibility, which help to minimise potential risk to all who are using the facility. For example, the Council carries out risk assessments for chapel and crematorium activities, and Sodexo for gravedigging activities. These risk assessments list the groups exposed to the hazards identified and a process for reviewing and completing identified actions. The Friends Group uses a health and safety guidance brief for its memorial recorders and has a risk assessment procedure for public events and insurance purposes.

Personal safety

The Cemetery is maintained to as safe a standard as can be afforded. Within this management plan there are various reference points which assist in keeping people as safe as possible as follows:

The Friends Group and visitors regularly raise areas of concern and issues so assisting to help minimise risk to Cemetery visitors.

Vandalism and graffiti – although the Cemetery experiences relatively low levels of antisocial behaviour, all incidents of vandalism and graffiti are reported to the Parks Service, who will arrange for the grounds maintenance contractor who, under the terms of the contract, will remove or as a last resort paint over noticeable graffiti as soon as possible after discovery in accordance with the following priorities:

Priority A: Offensive or racist material: removed within 24 hours of discovery

Priority B: Highly visible material: removed within 72 hours

Priority C: Other: Within five working day unless this involves painting where a schedule will be agreed with the Supervising Officer

All graffiti incidents are recorded and reported to the Council's Supervising Officer in a weekly incident report.

Emergencies - Any emergency is dealt with by contacting the relevant emergency service. Bereavement Services have a set of emergency procedures that cover the operation of the Crematorium

Any out of hours emergencies regarding the infrastructure of the cemetery can be reported to the out of hours number that is displayed on signage at the entrance to the site to make safe issues which are found to be an emergency in nature.

Accident / incident reporting - Any known accidents or incidents occurring within the boundaries of the site are reported to Bereavement Services and are recorded and acted on accordingly. Should any accident result in a potential insurance claim, this will then be investigated by staff working in Bereavement Services.

Accidents occurring to Council staff are recorded on the official accident form and processed in line with the Council's Health and Safety Policy Procedures Manual. The grounds maintenance contractor has their own reporting procedure, whereby any incidents are reported to the parks team however they are investigated by the contractor's Health and Safety Manager. Dependant on the severity of the incident, the Councils' Health and Safety advisor may be included in the case of RIDDOR reportable accidents on Council land.

2.7 Security

The Cemetery is open to the public 24 hours per day, all year round to visitors. There is very limited overlooking from the highway and residential properties overlooking the cemetery. Both the main drive into the Cemetery and the car parks are lit.

2.8 Inspection Procedures

The grounds maintenance contract requires the contractor to carry out the following inspections;

- All boundary, dividing and other fences/gates during the last full week of every other month. These inspections should take place in January, March, May etc. The Contractor will supply the Supervising Officer with a completed inspection sheet
- All Landscape Furniture during the last full week of every other month. Inspections should take place in February, April, June etc. The Contractor will supply the Supervising Officer with a completed inspection sheet

The qualitative elements of the contractor's inspections is covered by Quality Control Systems requirements set out in the contract documents.

There is no formal inspection regime for monuments, however the Registrar carries out a monthly site walk of the Cemetery and Crematorium grounds. The high numbers of visitors, Crematorium staff, grounds maintenance contractors and members of the Friends Group ensures that any issues arising are quickly reported to Bereavement Services.

2.9 Environmental Sustainability

The Council has made significant steps to reduce its use of natural resources to save money and cut its emissions of carbon dioxide. The Council strives to identify and deliver efficiencies and with the support of the Carbon Trust has identified further opportunities to improve.

The Council is a signatory to the Nottingham Declaration and in February 2011 declared its support for the Friends of the Earth campaign for the introduction of Local Carbon Budgets.

The Council does not have an Environmental or Sustainability Policy

The Grounds Maintenance contract sets out the requirements for the use of pesticides, but restricts their application to only where necessary and in some instances only with the prior approval of the Council. The use of herbicides is not permitted on herbaceous, shrub and rose beds, hedge bases except in exceptional circumstances. Herbicide use is permitted for stump treatment and hard surfaces, although the contract notes that preference is to be given to environmentally friendly products and weed control mechanisms wherever possible. Specifically to the Cemetery, no pesticides are permitted on the grave sections of the cemetery in order to protect habitats for fungi and orchids.

With respect to pesticides, the Contractor may carry out pesticide application to planted areas to control and prevent pest and disease attacks, with the exception of slug pellets. There is however a presumption in the contract that pests and/or diseases will be controlled through good husbandry and only exceptionally where required through the application of pesticides.

The contract requires arisings from pruning operations to be either chipped and composted or recycled, and lifted seasonal bedding plants to be composted as close to their planted location as possible. The contract does not provide for the use of locally composted material (although it could be offered as an

alternative by the Contractor) but rather specifies the use of spent mushroom compost and proprietary tree planting compost as soil ameliorants.

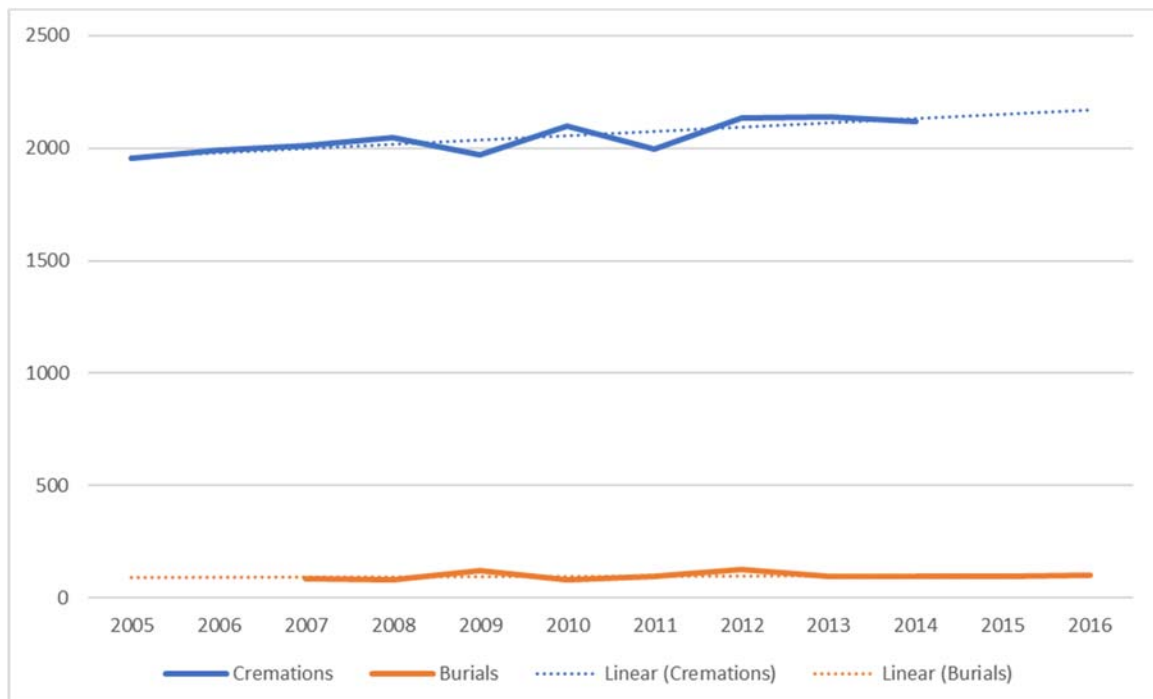
2.10 Service Context

The Bereavement Services Business Plan sets out background information on service pressures and market trends. Key issues that are of relevance to the public realm of the Cemetery and Crematorium are listed below;

Despite an increase in mortality age across the UK population, rates of Registered Deaths across the UK look set to remain static if not actually continuing to decrease over the foreseeable future, whilst cremation levels continue to account for in excess of 74% of the same.

However, at a local level, based on 10 years of data, the numbers of cremations per year at Tunbridge Wells appear to be increasing and the numbers of burials appear to be static. Figure 6 sets out the data for these services.

Figure 10 Tunbridge Wells Cremation and Burial statistics



With some 265 individual crematoria across the UK and no less than five other local crematoria in the immediate area, competition to the Kent & Sussex Crematorium looks set to become even more acute, with occasional up turns in throughput due to climactic conditions and/or disease epidemic. It is therefore becoming increasingly important to raise the quality of the service 'offering' to the bereaved and key stakeholders in order to maximise income through 'repeat business' and increased operational efficiency.

Whilst the service currently assists all bereaved families with their personal, cultural and religious wishes wherever possible, the current 2011 Census statistics for religion over the competitive area do not indicate any potential impact for the service. However, the quality of the service offering and current equalities legislation should remain paramount as part of ongoing sustainability of burial ground should demand increase from increasing faith groups such as Muslims in all policy and service provision decisions.

Demographic data in the Business Plan indicates a high level of disposable and residual income across the catchment area giving a good opportunity for medium and high end/niche priced commemorative products.

Memorial Risk Assessment is flagged as a key issue in the Business Plan. The Cemetery consists of approximately two thirds Consecrated Ground (under Ecclesiastical Jurisdiction) and the remainder as General Ground. The vast majority of private grave owners, irrespective of ground type, exercise their right to erect a memorial upon the grave to mark and commemorate those buried therein. Ownership and responsibility for the upkeep of the memorial remains that of the registered owner and is for a 10yr period however the council has legislative powers to take emergency action where any memorial becomes dangerous.

Memorials currently are expected to last circa 25 – 30 years as a minimum. Many memorials have been in place for well over 30 years and their ageing condition could present increasing risks to visitors, contractors and council staff. Risk assessment of memorials is a relatively straightforward process for those who have had the requisite training, though it remains labour-intensive due to the repetitive nature of the activity and the sheer number of memorials. Larger structures (Mausolea) will require a Structural Engineer to fulfil this task. Risk assessment for memorials is an ongoing cyclical process determined by the individual memorial and any remedial works carried out on it. Additionally, and prior to embarking upon risk assessment, thought needs to be given to the desired outcome and the costs associated with administration and labour. This outcome and these activities should also be sympathetic to cultural aspects such as any notable/local individuals interred and/or the architectural

merits of the memorials themselves. That said, these considerations should not be allowed to override the fundamental purpose of the cemetery as a burial site for the town and surrounding communities.

In the last 10 years there have been a number of national news headlines concerning Memorial Risk Assessment focusing upon issues of 'lack of sensitivity' in Local/Burial Authority actions, and the visibly catastrophic results or poorly considered outcomes. Procedures to enable memorial risk assessment in the Consecrated Ground of the cemetery have already been initiated with the Diocese of Rochester, which has set out a process of public notice prior to any Faculty Application to carry out Risk Assessment and/or remedial works.

The Business Plan also deals with the issue of re-use of graves. This is normally achieved by a process of 'lift and deepen' in a private grave where the Exclusive Rights of Burial to the same have been extinguished and where the last interment was over 75 years ago. At present no work has been undertaken to accurately determine the remaining burial space across the cemetery to assist in defining this, however cursory investigation of existing space in the context of current annual throughput and the existence of reserved burial space under 'recreational use' indicates that future burial space requirements are unlikely to become acute. The Council will need to make decisions to balance the potential adverse media interest in taking current recreational land for new burial space versus re-use of existing graves from the late 19th Century which have memorials erected upon them and these generally present the greatest potential hazard. Expediency would suggest that combining the process of grave re-use with that of memorial risk assessment would mitigate the remedial costs of the latter.

The Business Plan refers to the work of a Members' Task and Finish Group which considered in 2013 how to improve the service offered at the crematorium and cemetery for customers. This group concluded that;

- the preferred long-term option for the crematorium would be the development of a brand new facility ready for operation post 2028 which would offer increased flexibility capacity for larger services as well as opportunities for a dual chapel approach, offering an increase in peak time services
- In line with the Cultural Strategy, the Registrar should work with the Friends Group to pursue opportunities to utilise the space for a cultural purpose, for example, appealing to those visiting the cemetery, as a potential 'showroom' for memorial products and potentially explore the popularity of genealogical research

- In the context of refreshment and floristry provision, more evidence was needed to understand the needs of visitors and mourners to the site. It was agreed that testing of demand would be useful in planning for a new Crematorium post 2028.
- The Group found that customers wanted a wider range of memorial products. This could be met by an improvement to the existing schemes, the introduction of a new garden, columbaria and a memorial wall. There would be an initial estimated capital outlay of £100,000. An indication of demand showed that take-up of a wider range of products would be beneficial to the Council and a net gain of around £90,000 would be expected
- The creation of a long-term 'Vision' for the site to include an effective and focused marketing strategy, including;
 - Full adoption of the Institute of Cemetery & Crematorium Management (ICCM) 'Charter for the Bereaved'
 - Development and participation of a 'Friends of' group to provide additional linkages to the community
 - Stakeholder incentivisation
 - Pay On-Line Facilities
 - Sales Suite and Displays
 - Advertising in Death Registration office(s)

In response to the above, an Action Plan was appended to the Business Plan. Specific actions relating to the public realm of the cemetery and crematorium included;

Service Objective	Outcome	Action
Increase Range of Cremation Memorialisation Products.	Introduction of at least 3 additional commemorative products	Identify areas within existing grounds for Cremated Remains Dispersal Identify and implement memorial schemes of minimal outlay and 'quick win'

Increase/Improve the 'Service Offering'.	Adopt ICCM Charter for Natural/Green Burial Regular Engagement with Stakeholders	Identify existing cemetery space provision where possible Annual Meetings with FDS and Ministers and ad-hoc surveys
Service Marketing Strategy	Improved 'Service Offering' New Site Signage	Development of 'Friends of Tunbridge Wells Cemetery' Group Secure Professional Advice from Comm's Company
Memorial Risk Assessment & Grave Re-use	Safety of all working or visiting the cemetery Database of Memorials Local History - Notable Biographies Heritage Conservation Sustainable burial space.	Develop Business Options Report Secure Senior Mgt/Elected Member decision on desired outcome of assessment exercise Review of Cem/Mem Regulations

In recent years there has been a proliferation of memorial benches and Bereavement Services have now taken the view that no more will be provided.

2.11 Community Context

The Friends of Tunbridge Wells Cemetery was created in 2014 by a number of volunteers who had been actively involved in memorial recording. The Friends Group has the following aims;

Having full regard to its function as a working burial ground;

- *To further the protection, conservation and sympathetic enhancement of the Tunbridge Wells cemetery for public benefit and enjoyment;*
- *To record and foster its heritage of monuments and its ecological importance: and*
- *To foster its appropriate use as an educational resource for the community.*

The Friends Group has secured charitable status from HM Revenue & Customs and is seeking to obtain the status of a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) to allow registration with the Charity Commission.

The group has a growing membership and through a series of activities and events have demonstrated a strong commitment to the protection and sympathetic enhancement of the site.

The Group has carried out a number of activities and events, has published a number of documents and engaged in a variety of fundraising activities. These have included conservation of memorials, recording of inscriptions, management of a permanent exhibition, volunteer days and guided walks around heritage and nature conservation.

The Council has granted a licence to occupy the Chapel at a peppercorn rent to the Group, from where a permanent exhibition has been mounted showing the history of the Cemetery, and provides an opportunity for temporary exhibitions on suitable occasions.

It should be noted that although the Council welcomes the interest in and the contribution that the Friends make to the Cemetery, the Council is the owner and operator of the site and will ultimately be the decision making body for the site, having regard where appropriate to the views of the Friends Group.

2.12 Events and Activities

The Friends Group has carried out a large number and wide variety of events, and continues to develop an active programme. The table below lists those carried out to date;

Nature	Detail	Partner
Plan Preparation	Friends Strategic Plan with annual action roll forward Landscape Plan* Environment Plan* Ecological Survey* Mapping of key WW1 and WW2 memorials** Mapping of significant burial plots overall and by themes Ongoing engagement and discussion with outside bodies to identify perceived problems and opportunities	*Tunbridge Wells BC ** British Legion ** CWC
Memorial Conservation	Clearance and recording of memorials Reporting damage and encouraging steps to conserve memorials at risk Securing repairs by interested parties/descendants, and FTWC itself as resources allow.	

Nature	Detail	Partner
	Repair of broken Brentnall memorial and minor repairs done to others Reporting of maintenance damage done by contractors	
Restoration	Project for professional restoration of the tattered original grave plan Options and costs obtained for restoration of the chapel bell Junk removal/cleaning, with rehabilitation of selected original furnishings of the South Burial Chapel. Successful advocacy for restoration by TWBC. Development of its subsequent educational and promotional use.	Volunteers from XL Insurance TWBC
Inscription Recording	2500 plots- 1000s more to come.	
Historical Research	Research focussed on <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • prima facie interesting memorials as recorded; • where member of public shows interest and wants to be involved • where theme or event is being explored (e.g. paupers, Victorian soldiers, WW 1 and 2, missionaries, exceptional women) • material for walks, talks and publications. • building large data base on individuals for use in lectures, booklets, walks, exhibitions, engaging more people in the Friends work, deposit in local history archives 	Civic Society LHG, FWPC Skinners School, St Marks church British Legion, Interested individuals
Photographic Dossier	Every recorded memorial routinely photographed. Large general database being assembled of landscape, flora and fauna photographs, historic pictures associated with interesting "stories"	
Permanent Exhibition	'History of the Cemetery' in the chapel	
Temporary Exhibitions	Regularly changed to match events e.g. pauper burials, TW and the Somme, floral memorials Exhibitions also used at outside events associated with lectures about cemetery and its people	RTWCS, U3A, High Weald, TW Museum
Booklet Publication	'A Walk Around Some Interesting Memorials' 'William Brentnall 1829-1894' "Memorial symbols" Leaflet on Friends Foreword and contributions to TWBC booklet on the cemetery "The Forgotten Poor" will shortly issue "WW1 graves" in preparation for 2018	

Nature	Detail	Partner
	"Tree walk" is being planned.	
Maintain Online Presence	Website https://foftwc.wixsite.com/foftwc Facebook https://www.facebook.com/TunbridgeWellsCemetery Twitter https://twitter.com/FoHCTW	
Newsletter	Online and Printed. Also Press releases and contributions, including to Civic Society and other Friends Groups newsletters	
Maintenance	Restoration of overgrown area and addition of bench near the north boundary children's plots, Restoration of primrose beds Maintenance of children's area and memorial in far SW corner of cemetery, Obtaining volunteer teams for "clearance challenge days" Tidying of historic graves on walk routes. Checking of toilets by burial chapels	TWBC AXA SANDS
Signage	Commonwealth War Graves Commission sign installed at entrance Friends notice board by toilets.	Commonwealth War Graves Commission
Membership	Grown membership from 10 founding members of MIG to 61 today. Aiming at 100 and attracting corporate members	FWPC Civic Society
Fundraising	Received a grant from ICCM Seeking further funding	ICCM
	Members subscriptions Sale of booklets, plants and refreshments. Fees from giving lectures. Donations, including from Oddfellows Sponsorships.	
Events	Annual Remembrance Days -walks, lecture, opening of chapel for refreshments Special 2016 Somme commemoration exhibition One planned for Armistice Day 2018	Royal Tunbridge Wells British Legion TWBC TA

Nature	Detail	Partner
	Work with Skinners School on associated event on those staff and pupils who survived WW1 Celebration of 100 th anniversary of women's suffrage	Sea Scouts Local secondary schools
	Annual Heritage Open Days- walks, exhibitions in South Chapel	
	Guided Walks-- tailored to suit individuals, groups and special events	
	Fungi Hunt	Kent High Weald Partnership
	Bat Walk	Kent High Weald Partnership Kent Bat Group
	Plant Hunt	Ian Beavis
	Birdsong Walk Lichen identification Lectures to local groups Public lecture programme	Martin Allison FTWC Keith Palmer members and invited speakers
	Exhibition, guided walk and refreshments for the Registrars TWBC Open Day	TWBC
Education	Lectures Visiting and encouraging a local secondary school to undertake a history project related to the cemetery	
Public Service	Helping individuals to find "lost" graves and encouraging them to play a part in researching and restoring them	
Capacity Building	Through close working and idea exchange with Friends of Woodbury Park Cemetery and the RTW Civic Society Learning from projects further afield through annual outings to other cemeteries and discuss their activities, including Willesden Jewish Cemetery Heritage Project Become members of the National Federation of Cemetery Friends and of Gods Acre and attend some of their events/ use their data and ideas. Memorial Inscriptions Group has been established to encourage and help people to learn how to interpret memorial features, and how to do research methodically on those memorialised. Also, how to write up and share their findings.	FWPC and RTW Civic Society

Nature	Detail	Partner
Advocacy	Building relationships with local officials, Councillors, and MP	

2.13 Marketing

The Crematorium and Cemetery are marketed by a combination of website and brochures. The service has a microsite hosted by the Council which provides a range of information on the service, and this site is updated by the Registrar. Social media is not used by the Council but the website's blog facility is used to generate email communication and reduce reliance on postal communication. Information boards on the site are used to provide information for visitors.

The Friends Group has a website, Twitter account and a Facebook page and issue a regular newsletter. Information boards on the site are used to provide information for visitors.

Section B – Where Do We Want to Get To?

3 Vision, aims and objectives

3.1 Vision

The Friends Group has prepared a Vision for the Cemetery as follows;

A place of quiet reflection giving comfort to the bereaved, sensitively managed to conserve and enhance its ecology, historic structures and landscape character for future generations with full regard to its operational requirements

The vision will be achieved through the delivery of the aims set out below and the objectives identified in the analysis sections below under each of the Green Flag Award criteria.

3.2 Aims

This Management and Maintenance Plan sets out the following aims:

1. To ensure that Tunbridge Wells Cemetery is a welcoming place;
2. To ensure that Tunbridge Wells Cemetery is a healthy, safe and secure place;
3. To ensure that Tunbridge Wells Cemetery is clean and well maintained;
4. To manage Tunbridge Wells Cemetery in an environmentally sustainable manner;
5. To conserve and enhance the biodiversity, landscape and heritage of Tunbridge Wells Cemetery;
6. To involve the community in the management and development of Tunbridge Wells Cemetery;
7. To market and promote Tunbridge Wells Cemetery as an important heritage and green space resource for the local community;
8. To effectively manage Tunbridge Wells Cemetery in partnership with the Friends of Tunbridge Wells Cemetery
9. To manage the Cemetery in a cost-effective manner and to achieve the Council's income targets for the service

3.3 Green Flag quality assessment

An assessment based on the Green Flag Award criteria has been undertaken to inform the content of the Management and Development Plan. The Green Flag Award scheme recognises and rewards well managed parks and green spaces, setting the benchmark standard for the management of recreational outdoor spaces across the United Kingdom and around the world.

The key criteria for the Green Flag Award are shown below;

- A Welcoming Place
- Healthy, Safe and Secure
- Clean and Well Maintained
- Sustainability
- Conservation and Heritage
- Community Involvement
- Marketing
- Management

The award scoring is made up of

Desk Assessment 30%

Field Assessment 70%

There are 27 field assessment criteria, which are:

A Welcoming Park

- Welcoming
- Good and safe access
- Signage
- Equal access for all

Healthy, Safe and Secure

- Appropriate levels of facilities and activities
- Safe equipment and facilities
- Personal security
- Control of Dogs / Fouling

Clean and Well Maintained

- Litter and waste management
- Horticultural maintenance
- Arboricultural maintenance
- Building & infrastructure maintenance
- Equipment Maintenance

Environmental Management

- Managing environmental Impact
- Waste minimisation
- Chemical Use
- Peat Use
- Climate Change adaptation strategies

Biodiversity, Landscape and Heritage

- Management of natural features, wild flora and fauna
- Conservation of landscape features
- Conservation of buildings and structures

Community Involvement

- Community involvement in management & development
- Appropriate provision for the community

Marketing

- Marketing and promotion
- Appropriate information channels
- Appropriate educational and interpretational information

Management

- Implementation of a management plan

Each individual criterion was scored out of 10 and a site score derived from the total of all the criteria scores divided by the actual number of criteria scored.

Within the Green Flag Award a scoring line gives an indication of what each score means as follows:

Score	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Quality	Very Poor		Poor			Fair		Good	Very Good	Excellent	Exceptional

Table 1 Green Flag Scoring Line

A site visit to carry out the scoring was carried out unaccompanied on the 25 October 2017. This was followed up with discussions with key council staff. The summary scores by criteria are shown in Table 2 below. The full scores with evidence are included in Appendix E

A Welcoming Place		
1	Welcoming	8
2	Good and safe access	9
3	Signage	8
4	Equal access for all	8
Healthy Safe and Secure		
5	Appropriate levels of facilities and activities	8
6	Safe equipment and facilities	7
7	Personal security	9
8	Control of Dogs / Fouling	10
Clean and Well Maintained		
9	Litter and waste management	9
10	Horticultural maintenance	8
11	Arboricultural maintenance	7
12	Building & infrastructure maintenance	9
13	Equipment Maintenance	N/A
Environmental Management		
14	Managing environmental Impact	6
15	Waste minimisation	6
16	Chemical Use	7
17	Peat Use	3
18	Climate Change adaptation strategies	3
Biodiversity, Landscape and Heritage		
19	Management of natural features, wild flora and fauna	9
20	Conservation of landscape features	9
21	Conservation of buildings and structures	8
Community Involvement		
22	Community involvement in management & development	9
23	Appropriate provision for the community	9
Marketing		
24	Marketing and promotion	7
25	Appropriate information channels	9
26	Appropriate educational and interpretational information	9
Management		
27	Implementation of management plan	N/A

Table 2 Green Flag Scores for

Tunbridge Wells Cemetery

3.4 A welcoming place

The site has defined boundaries to residential properties, highways, sports pitches and a golf course on all sides. It is of a significant size with mature trees and planting and occasional glimpse views out to the High Weald to the south east. The scale of the landscape varies between the character zones from open with good sightlines in the cemetery grounds to enclosed and intimate in the themed memorial spaces in the crematorium grounds. The new and historic entrances off Benhall Mill Road and Bayham Road are attractive and welcoming, being framed variously by hedging, brick and masonry walls and piers with attractive gates and signage. The presence of the Crematorium office and former lodges at entrances adds to the sense of arrival and welcome, as does the well maintained planting at entrances.

A bus route with 2 operators provides a direct service from the town centre. There is car parking by the Crematorium offices, at the Crematorium chapel, and an additional parking area to the south west of the Crematorium complex, and space for parking on the road that circles the historic Cemetery chapel.

There is a hierarchy of well signed access routes across the site; the main drive to the Crematorium and then a grid pattern of roads and paths based on the original Cemetery access drive from Benham Mill Road to Bayham Road, which is welcoming and offers a wide variety and choice of routes for the visitor. Given the size of the Cemetery, Bereavement Services recognise that it can be hard for new visitors to locate particular areas and have invested in the site signage above, provide plans showing the detail of particular areas, and will always assist visitors in locating graves or features on request within opening hours.

Access into the site is signed at all entrances with 'Welcome' and site name signs, plus visitor information at and near the entrances. There is an abundance of signage within the site, mostly in a consistent house style of claret for the Crematorium and slate blue for the Cemetery. The signage is directional, locational (on layout plans) and informative. In addition, there are cabinets with notices which were observed to be up to date and include relevant information on events and visitor information. Signage was clean, well maintained and legible. There was no signage at the Cemetery Chapel to indicate its use by the community, opening hours and the permanent exhibition within.

The modern toilet block adjacent to the Cemetery chapel, although well maintained, is a little incongruous given the setting of the listed building nearby.

In some locations mourners are placing large numbers of showy commemorative items on and around graves, particularly those of infants and children. Whilst expressions of grief and mourning are always

going to be a highly sensitive matter and one of personal opinion and taste, the potential exists for these to detract from the site's tranquil and historic qualities. The Bereavement Services Business Plan found that customers wanted a wider range of commemorative products and the opportunity exists to promote a range that are fitting to the character of the Cemetery.

Contemporary sculpture has been added in places, for example in the SANDS Garden, which add to the interest for visitors and in creating a sense of place, and the opportunity exists to add more such features in appropriate locations in keeping with the history of provision of memorial features since the first laying out of the Cemetery.

Recommendations

1. Create some distinctive spaces and peaceful sitting areas including for graves of babies and young children close to the recent burials in the north east corner
2. Subject to the identification of resources, the creation of appropriate new "heritage" features in the cemetery perhaps to reinforce definition of some new character areas
3. Recommendation of appropriate commemorative items for cemetery sales, memorials and planting at gravesides that would contribute to long term sustainability of the natural and historic environment
4. Improve signage (waymarking and orientation) – should show zones and use colour
5. Continue to address the issue of visual 'clutter' by continuing to apply Cemetery regulations in an appropriate and sensitive manner, particularly in relation to lawn sections in order to minimise conflict with grass cutting operations

3.5 Healthy Safe and Secure

The site appears well maintained and there is adequate seating and litter bins. Seating is located to provide both sun and shade and is generally a consistent hardwood style, with distinctive granite benches in the Primrose Gardens. Litter bins are present throughout the site in appropriate locations.

Two hierarchies of access routes across the site serve different functions. A main drive from the first gate with its cemetery office exclusively serves the crematorium, and the car park outside the crematorium chapel gives access to the newer types of commemoration area. A different hierarchy of routes serves the

cemetery burial grounds with a tree and shrub bordered main drive from the original Lodge up to the twin chapels for burial services, then downhill as a sweeping avenue exiting past another Lodge. This route gives orderly access to the grid of grave plots via subordinate vehicle routes and grassy pedestrian avenues. It was planned to afford beautiful vistas in all directions. Surfacing is predominantly tarmacadam, of varying ages and in some places patched and a little fretted, but none are in an adverse condition. More recent surfaces in the Memorial Gardens, Crosses of Sacrifice and Primrose Gardens and around the Crematorium, are concrete, rolled stone, stone flag and unit paving and are in a consistently good condition. In addition to the paved surfaces, there is free access across grassed area, whose condition varies from a formal box mown finish at the War Graves section to undulating ground and long grass in the older areas of the Cemetery. It is noted that the Friends Group publication *Memorial Symbols* urges caution to visitors regarding the 'dangerous pitfalls' of the older parts of the site.

There are no restrictions on parking on the access roads through the Cemetery, but cars parking on the narrower routes are noted to block them and divert pedestrians to walk on the grass. Poor visibility due to blind corners in some locations have led to near misses due to inappropriate speed and damage to soft verges due to vehicle overruns.

Sightlines and intervisibility within the grounds are generally open, although the themed memorial spaces in the crematorium grounds are, by design, much more intimate spaces. However, multiple access routes and filtered views between these spaces mean that they do not feel intimidating. Similarly, the landscape of the wealthier part of the historic Cemetery has a much more enclosed feel than the wider site, but levels of use and filtered views do not make it intimidating,

The Cemetery's tree stock has been subject to a series of surveys, the most recent update being carried out in 2015, and the Council holds a database with information species, age, height, comments, proposed work and priority. The positions of these trees are shown on the drawing in Appendix D. No trees are subject to Tree Preservation Orders, however there are a number subject to TPOs in gardens adjoining the north east and north west boundaries.

Whereas there is very limited overlooking and visual policing from adjacent properties (primarily on Benhall Mill Road) and almost none from the adjacent roads due to the sites boundary walls and hedges and intervening buildings, the site enjoys high levels of visual policing as a result of the levels of users, either attending funerals, visiting graves or attending Friends Group events; the grounds maintenance contractors and Crematorium staff based on the site. There are multiple access and egress points to assist with escape in the event of an incident or a perceived threat occurring.

There is a ban on dogs entering the site, and although this is not fully observed, there was no evidence of any fouling. As a consequence, no dog bins are provided.

Particular hazards are also presented by monuments and ground settlement. There is currently no formal inspection regime, with reliance on the presence of contractors, visitors and the Friends group to report and issues to the staff, although it is understood that a draft regime is preparation.

The operational nature of the site for burials presents significant hazards to visitors in the form of preparation of graves, but the risks associated with these appear to be well managed by the Council and the Grounds Maintenance contractor who is responsible for their excavation, protection and filling.

Although there have been some issues in the past with antisocial behaviour, there was no evidence of any vandalism.

Recommendations

6. Introduce a Memorial Inspection policy and procedure in accordance with ICCM guidance
7. Consider the introduction of appropriate and sensitive measures for the management of moving and parked vehicles within the Cemetery
8. Consider potential for provision of new and replacement of poor quality paved areas with memorial slabs funded by relatives

3.6 Clean and well maintained

At the time of the assessment, grounds maintenance teams were cutting grass at the main Crematorium entrance and adjacent to the War Graves area. Grass cutting is the dominant maintenance activity at the site and during the summer months appears to be a constant and labour intensive process. In addition to the surface paths, grassed areas act as access to graves and monuments but there is no differentiation for potential grass routes in the grass cutting regime

The site appears to be maintained to a high standard; grass areas, which are maintained to varying frequencies and heights of cut, appear neat, with the more relaxed areas being in keeping with the older parts of the cemetery which lend themselves to this approach given the number of obstacles and uneven ground levels. The herbaceous, shrub and aquatic planting areas are predominantly weed and litter free.

There is evidence of recent work to the site's tree stock in the form of pruning and removals and there is a diversity of age, species and form in the tree stock, albeit with a preponderance of coniferous species. Whereas the site's tree stock makes a significant contribution to its character, it does limit the attractive views out to the High Weald and consideration could be given to some appropriate tree management to capture these attractive borrowed views. The very small amounts of litter present on the site appear to be associated with grave items and are restricted to a few inaccessible areas under trees and shrubs. The Council will continue to face a challenge in seeking to maintain these high standards in the face of increasing financial pressures.

There are a number of instances of self-set trees and shrubs establishing in monuments leading to the potential for longer term damage.

There was little sign of reactive maintenance as a response to vandalism, damage or graffiti and this is further indication that these are not common occurrences.

The visitor facilities of car parks, Crematorium public realm and toilets appear clean and well maintained.

The listed chapel has been sensitively restored for use in services and by the Friends Group and appears clean, welcoming and well maintained.

Recommendations

9. Consider reducing grass cutting regimes (via a trial exercise with suitable information for visitors and/or targets to progressively increase the areas managed less intensively) in the older parts of the cemetery where a less formal appearance is more in keeping with character
10. Removal of self-seeding trees and shrubs from memorials
11. Consider an additional maintenance regime for the network of grass paths across the historic cemetery, accompanied by sympathetic levelling of uneven ground to assist access

3.7 Environmental Management

Use of pesticides appears to be kept to the minimum that cost effectiveness permits, with applications of a number of types being subject to prior agreement with the Council. There does not appear to be any restriction on use of peat in the Grounds Maintenance contract specification, and whereas the contract

requires prunings and lifted seasonal bedding to be composted or recycled it does not specify where the material is to be used or sent, with the risk that its use may be accompanied by higher levels of energy use than if it was used locally.

Recommendations

12. Give consideration to specifying the use of peat free products
13. Give consideration to ensuring that composted waste is reused locally
14. Carry out audit to establish use of pesticides

3.8 Biodiversity, Landscape and Heritage

The site offers a highly distinctive and valued cultural and natural resource and in terms of its grassland fungi, international importance. The site has a range of trees, grassland habitats and small-scale aquatic features which are of value to wildlife. Part of the site has been designated as Local Wildlife site TW58 in the Tunbridge Wells Local Biodiversity Action Plan (TWLBAP) as a Lowland Acid Grassland site. This habitat is a priority habitat type in the UK Biodiversity Action Plan.

The site's landscape has evolved from a combination of elements; geology, soils, topography, vegetation and human influences which have created a special place. These are respected and conserved by the Council and the Friends, and this is evident by the modified maintenance regime to conserve grassland and fungi species; the conservation and repair of monuments and memorials; and the recording and celebration of the natural and cultural history of the site by the Friends in publications and activities. The memorials offer a fascinating insight into the history of a wide range of Tunbridge Wells' former residents.

Both the Council and the Friends have carried out sensitive restoration, repair and maintenance of a number of monuments, and the Friends have carried out natural conservation based volunteering activities. However, the Friends Group has expressed concern at the emerging range of commemorative items and memorabilia that are being left at the site, and the sometimes garish impact that these can have.

The restoration of the listed Cemetery chapel has allowed the removal of a number of unsympathetic additions, and created a sustainable future for the building for use as a venue for smaller services and as a fitting community base for the Friends Group.

In addition to the monuments and memorials, the site has historic features in the form of historic stone boundary walls and entrance features which mark the extent of the original Cemetery layout.

Much information has been gained on the site's ecology from a variety of surveys, however those surveys are incomplete in terms of their range and are becoming dated. The ecological report prepared by the Kent High Weald Partnership notes that apart from for fungus species, for which surveys have been carried out over a number of years, no detailed ecological survey was carried out and that species information was mainly based on a 2006 survey. It makes recommendations on future surveys including an annual fungi survey, and for lichen, birds and bats. The Kent Wildlife Trust and the Bat Conservation Trust have advised of the adverse impact that outdoor lighting can have on bat activity, and in recent years the Cemetery has seen introduction of grave lighting never envisaged in past cemetery regulations.

A proposed new Crematorium building is being considered for the site, with a commissioning date to fit the expiry of the cremators in the current building. The proposed building, to be located on the sports field to the south of the site, is likely to have a significant landscape and visual impact on the site as well as support increased user numbers in line with current trends. It is important that it makes a positive contribution not only to the historic core of the cemetery but also on adjacent residential amenity and the wider landscape character; not only in terms of the Council's environmental and cultural agendas, but also to assist in securing community support for the proposals and maximise its prospects of securing planning permission.

Recommendations

15. Commission new and updated surveys in order that the ecological data for the site remains up to date as below;
 - Annual fungal survey by Friends of Tunbridge Wells Cemetery
 - Lichen survey
 - Annual spring survey of breeding birds by Friends of Tunbridge Wells Cemetery, with results submitted to British Trust for Ornithology and Kent and Medway Biological Records Centre
 - Bat survey by the Kent High Weald Partnership (in conjunction with the Kent Bat Group)

16. Carry out initial scoping/outline design proposals for the proposed new Crematorium in order to inform the subsequent design process and budget allocation in order that the new building makes a positive contribution to the setting of the Cemetery
17. Review the maintenance of grassland in the light of updated ecological surveys and the site's status as Local Wildlife site TW58 in the Tunbridge Wells Local Biodiversity Action Plan
18. Prepare a tree management framework to consider when carrying out work on the site's tree stock, with reference to;
 - a. The potential to open and improve longer distance views to the High Weald where borrowed views are a characteristic of the site
 - b. Maintain enclosure where this is a characteristic of the site or would help define new character areas
 - c. Species diversity and age
 - d. Ecological diversity (including provision of native species)
 - e. The potential to frame views which will change on construction of the new Crematorium
 - f. Seasonal aspects of trees
 - g. The site's status as Local Wildlife site TW58 in the Tunbridge Wells Local Biodiversity Action Plan
19. Preservation and in some cases better show-casing of all historic structures including the original wall
20. Creation of a new graves strategy to regulate positioning
21. Place bird boxes in the trees around the grounds to encourage breeding tit species, robin, dunnock, etc

3.9 Community Involvement

The Friends of Tunbridge Wells Cemetery are a well-established and highly motivated group and have been successful in running events, carrying out research into, promoting and securing funding for the site. However, despite the growth in membership the group like many similar community based organisations is reliant on a relatively small number of active members. The Friends Group should continue to be supported to develop skills and increase capacity.

The Friends Group has observed that despite the relatively high levels of effort that they put into gardening tasks, these have relatively low visibility and, despite their value to the site, are not particularly effective in recruiting new volunteers.

Recommendations

22. Support the Friends of Tunbridge Wells Cemetery to develop skills, capacity and broaden their membership
23. Provide opportunities for local people to contribute to the conservation and development of the site through surveys, consultation, events and activities

3.10 Marketing

Marketing and promotion of the Cemetery takes place through a number of channels. The Friends Group has a Facebook and a website which promote the Cemetery and its activities, and this provides a link to the Council's Cemetery microsite. Both are regularly updated and have content on a range of themes. The Friends Group publishes a frequent newsletter which is available on the website which includes detail on events, history and research activity.

Events and activities are promoted locally via specific publicity and through information posted on the site's noticeboards. The work of the Friends is also promoted through the exhibitions, lectures and walks that arranged.

The Crematorium and Cemetery are marketed by a combination of website and brochures. The service has a microsite hosted by the Council which provides a range of information on the service, and this site is updated by the Registrar. Social media is not used but the website's blog facility is used to generate email communication and reduce reliance on postal communication. Information boards on the site are used to

provide information for visitors. The Registrar collects feedback from Crematorium and Cemetery users, and testimonials from these are posted on the Cemetery microsite. The Friends Group – due to their limited resources – do not collect specific feedback on events but instead carry out a post-event review of what did and didn't go well at subsequent Committee meetings and then seek improvements from that exercise, using invitations to speak, sale of products, membership numbers and responses to the reception of the Group's ideas and invitations as a barometer of success.

3.11 Management

The Cemetery is owned, managed and operated by Tunbridge Wells Borough Council, and whereas there is no formal agreement with the Friends Group, it has a significant role in promoting and celebrating the Cemetery's distinctive heritage and natural environment as well as acting as 'eyes and ears' on the ground in relation to everyday management and maintenance issues.

The Council created a Bereavement Board to oversee strategic issues associated with the Cemetery, however the Friends Group were not engaged in this and it has subsequently been disbanded. Engagement with the Council takes place via an annual meeting. The Council's Property team hold an asset register for all buildings in Council ownership and carry out a planned maintenance programme.

Recommendations

24. Introduce a formalised but proportional means of the Council engaging with the Friends Group, by Bereavement Services being invited to attend the Friends Group meetings on a 6 monthly basis, whilst continuing ad-hoc site walks as necessary.

Section C – How Are We Going to Get There?

4 Delivery of the Vision

The section above sets out analysis and recommendations for Tunbridge Wells Cemetery with justification for their inclusion in this Management and Development Plan. The recommendations are carried forward and set out within the Action Plan in section 4.1. Sections 5.1 and 5.2 set out how the implementation of the Management and Development Plan will be monitored and reviewed.

4.1 Action plan

Ref	Recommendation	Financial Year(s)	Lead	Partners	Resource implication	Date Completed
1.	Create some distinctive spaces and peaceful sitting areas including for graves of babies and young children close to the recent burials in the north east corner	Ongoing, subject to identification of resources	Bereavement Services	Friends of Tunbridge Wells Cemetery	Bereavement Services budgets Sponsorship	
2.	Creation of appropriate new "heritage" features in the cemetery	Ongoing, subject to identification of resources	Bereavement Services	Friends of Tunbridge Wells Cemetery	Bereavement Services budgets Sponsorship	
3.	Recommendation of appropriate commemorative items for cemetery sales, memorials and planting at gravesides that would contribute to long term sustainability of the natural and historic environment	2018/19	Bereavement Services	Friends of Tunbridge Wells Cemetery		
4.	Improve signage (waymarking and orientation) – should show zones and use colour	2018/19	Bereavement Services	Friends of Tunbridge Wells Cemetery	Bereavement Services budgets	

Ref	Recommendation	Financial Year(s)	Lead	Partners	Resource implication	Date Completed
5.	Continue to address the issue of visual 'clutter' by continuing to apply Cemetery regulations in an appropriate and sensitive manner, particularly in relation to lawn sections in order to minimise conflict with grass cutting operations	Ongoing	Bereavement Services			
6.	Introduce a Memorial Inspection policy and procedure in accordance with ICCM guidance	2018/19	Bereavement Services			
7.	Consider the introduction of appropriate and sensitive measures for the management of moving and parked vehicles within the Cemetery	2018/19	Bereavement Services	Friends of Tunbridge Wells Cemetery	Bereavement Services budgets	
8.	Consider potential for provision of new and replacement of poor quality paved areas with memorial slabs funded by relatives	Ongoing subject to identification of suitable areas and receipt of donations	Bereavement Services	Friends of Tunbridge Wells Cemetery	Sponsorship	

Ref	Recommendation	Financial Year(s)	Lead	Partners	Resource implication	Date Completed
9.	Reduction in grass cutting regimes in the older parts of the cemetery where a less formal appearance is more in keeping with character	Ongoing	Parks and Sports	Friends of Tunbridge Wells Cemetery		
10.	Removal of self-seeding trees and shrubs from memorials	Ongoing	Parks and Sports	Friends of Tunbridge Wells Cemetery		
11.	Introduction an additional maintenance regime for the network of grass paths across the historic cemetery, accompanied by sympathetic levelling of uneven ground to assist access	2018/19	Parks and Sports	Friends of Tunbridge Wells Cemetery		
12.	Specifying the use of peat free products	2018/19	Parks and Sports			
13.	Ensuring that composted waste is reused locally	2019/20	Parks and Sports			
14.	Carry out audit to establish use of pesticides	2018/19	Parks and Sports			
15.	Commission new and updated surveys in order that the ecological data for the site remains up to date	Ongoing, starting 2018/19	Bereavement Services		Bereavement Services budgets (where not volunteered)	

Ref	Recommendation	Financial Year(s)	Lead	Partners	Resource implication	Date Completed
16.	Carry out initial scoping/outline design proposals for the proposed new Crematorium in order to inform the subsequent design process and budget allocation in order that the new building makes a positive contribution to the setting of the Cemetery	2019/20	Bereavement Services	Friends of Tunbridge Wells Cemetery	Bereavement Services budgets (unless design services core funded)	
17.	Review the maintenance of grassland in the light of updated ecological surveys and the site's status as Local Wildlife site TW58 in the Tunbridge Wells Local Biodiversity Action Plan	Ongoing as informed by findings of surveys	Parks and Sports	Friends of Tunbridge Wells Cemetery	Potential implication for GM budgets	
18.	Prepare a tree management framework to consider when carrying out work on the site's tree stock	2019/20	Parks and Sports	Friends of Tunbridge Wells Cemetery		
19.	Preservation and in some cases better show-casing of all historic structures including the original wall	Ongoing subject to resources	Bereavement Services	Friends of Tunbridge Wells Cemetery	Bereavement Services budgets	

Ref	Recommendation	Financial Year(s)	Lead	Partners	Resource implication	Date Completed
20.	Creation of a new graves strategy to regulate positioning	2018/19	Bereavement Services	Friends of Tunbridge Wells Cemetery		
21.	Place bird boxes in the trees around the grounds to encourage breeding tit species, robin, dunnock, etc	Ongoing	Friends of Tunbridge Wells Cemetery	Bereavement Services	Friends budgets	
22.	Support the Friends of Tunbridge Wells Cemetery to develop skills, capacity and broaden their membership	Ongoing	Bereavement Services			
23.	Provide opportunities for local people to contribute to the conservation and development of the site through surveys, consultation, events and activities	Ongoing	Friends of Tunbridge Wells Cemetery	Bereavement Services		

Ref	Recommendation	Financial Year(s)	Lead	Partners	Resource implication	Date Completed
24.	Introduce a formalised but proportional means of the Council engaging with the Friends Group, by Bereavement Services being invited to attend the Friends Group meetings on a 6 monthly basis, whilst continuing ad-hoc site walks as necessary.	From 2018/19	Bereavement Services	Friends of Tunbridge Wells Cemetery		

Section D – How Will We Know When We Have Arrived?

5 Monitoring and Review

5.1 Monitoring and Review arrangements

To ensure that all aspects of Management and Development Plan are implemented it is necessary to undertake regular reviewing as follows

Monthly

The monthly Grounds Maintenance review meetings held between Parks and Sports' Supervising Officer and the Contractor's Contract Manager may be used to monitor those elements of the Management and Development Plan, with additional attendance as appropriate by a representative of Bereavement Services on a quarterly basis.

Annually

An annual review will be undertaken by representatives from Bereavement Services, Parks and Sports and the Friends of Tunbridge Wells Cemetery, under the engagement structure recommended in the Action Plan.

Five Yearly

The Management Plan will be fully reviewed in terms of looking back to identify the success and achievement over the previous years and looking forward to take into account the achievements required over the next five years. This review will include taking account the results of any visitor surveys and user feedback.

The review may result in revisions of the analysis and recommendations section of the Management and Development Plan as the recommendations are implemented and as new issues and priorities are identified.

5.2 Measures of Success

5.2.1 Council Five Year Plan

The Council's 'Strategic Compass' brings together its Corporate Priorities, proposals to improve services for residents and customers, its commitments to and expectations of its people and providing value. The activities and services covered by this Management and Development Plan which contribute to this model include;

- Enhancing parks and open spaces
- Enabling empowered communities
- Enabling the delivery of community facilities
- Working with the best-placed partners
- Make money, save money, improve processes

The performance measures proposed below can all be seen to support and provide evidence for delivery of the above priorities.

5.2.2 A welcoming place

- Perceptions of a welcoming place from user surveys

5.2.3 Healthy Safe and Secure

- Number of recorded incidents
- Number of reported crimes
- Perceptions of safety from user surveys

5.2.4 Clean and well maintained

- User satisfaction from user surveys
- Performance against standards through internal site quality audits
- Reduction in complaints

5.2.5 Environmental Management

- Amount of pesticide use
- Amount of peat use
- Amount of recycled compost used
- Perceptions of the site being managed in an environmentally friendly way from user surveys

5.2.6 Biodiversity, Landscape and Heritage

- Number of species of flora and fauna recorded
- Percentage of the site being managed for wildlife
- Perceptions of the site making a contribution to wildlife from user surveys
- Numbers of memorials recorded and conserved and where relevant Local Listings of memorials and structures
- Successful implementation of appropriate new heritage, landscape, ecology and educational initiatives and interventions

5.2.7 Community Involvement

- Number of members of the Friends Group
- Number of events run
- Number of people attending events
- Number of volunteer hours input
- Diversity/types of users
- Number of school / educational organisations involved

5.2.8 Marketing

- Number of press articles generated

5.2.9 Management

- Green Flag Award secured
- Delivery of site improvements
- Annual quality audit score

Appendix A

Bills of Quantity – Tunbridge Wells Cemetery and Crematorium

Appendix B

Listing entry for Cemetery Chapel

Appendix C

Service Specification for Grounds Maintenance

Appendix D

Tree survey information

Appendix E

Green Flag Quality Audit

Site Name / ID No. Tunbridge Wells Cemetery	Date 25 October 2017
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Typology		Accessibility	
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A WELCOMING PLACE			
		score	Comments and reasons for score, covering every heading
1	Welcoming	8	Attractive entrances framed with stone/brick walls/piers & name/welcome signs. Cemetery office/attractive historic lodges and well maintained planting add to the sense of arrival and welcome. Access drives through attractive and well maintained grounds enhance the sense of arrival.
2	Good and safe access	9	Excellent network and hierarchy of metalled paths. 2 x bus routes direct from Town Centre. Adequate and safe car parking, both in dedicated car parks and on surfaced routes through the site. Cycle parking provision at the Crematorium. Car speeds and nature of visiting drivers would appear sufficiently low not to be a significant hazard across the site
3	Signage	8	Clear signage to the site on the approaching road network. Good entrance signs and signage on the layout with dedicated locational and informative signage for different parts of the site. Generally coherent house style. Contact numbers are provided as are out of hours details
4	Equal access for all	8	Given that the primary purpose is a Cemetery, the site is welcoming and highly accessible for a wide range of users

HEALTHY SAFE AND SECURE			
		score	Comments and reasons for score, covering every heading
5	Appropriate levels of facilities and activities	8	Given that the primary purpose is a Cemetery; site has paths, seating, bins, toilets, a range of horticultural and water features, parking and a wide range of year round cultural and environmental events and activities
6	Safe equipment and facilities	7	Paths are level and in good condition. Bins, seats and toilets appear safe and well maintained. Although there is no formal inspection and recording regime for monuments, the high level of staffing present ensure that any safety related issues are quickly addressed. Score has been reduced slightly as a result of uneven ground, voids and trip hazards arising from grave settlement
7	Personal security	9	The site is very well used and there is a noticeable staff/contractor presence. There are generally good sightlines and multiple access/egress points. The site is partially overlooked in places from adjacent dwellings, and main routes/car parks are lit.
8	Control of Dogs / Fouling	10	There is a 'no dogs' restriction on the site which is enforced

6 CLEAN AND WELL MAINTAINED			
		Score	Comments and reasons for score, covering every heading
9	Litter and waste management	9	Very little evidence of littering, being restricted to small amounts under vegetation in places. There are abundant bins which are emptied on a sufficient basis to prevent overflowing.
10	Horticultural maintenance	8	There is a variety of terrestrial and aquatic planting which is well maintained. Grass is cut on a variety of regimes, from very formal (at main entrance, by the Chapel and War Graves) to more relaxed in the older parts of the Cemetery where ground conditions and character make this more appropriate. Volunteer horticultural activity is evident
11	Arboricultural maintenance	7	There is evidence of recent work in the form of pruning and removals and there is a diversity of age, species and form in the tree stock
12	Building & infrastructure maintenance	9	Buildings, paths, seats, bins, memorial walls, paving and water features appear well maintained. Toilets are clean and appropriately stocked. No graffiti or vandalism was evident. The Chapel has been sympathetically restored and appears to be well used for services and by the Friends
13	Equipment maintenance	N/A	

7 ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT			
		Score	Comments and reasons for score, covering every heading
14	Managing environmental Impact	6	The Council has signed up to reducing its carbon footprint, having adopted a Carbon Management Plan, but the plan period expired in 2015 and the Council does not have an Environmental or Sustainability Policy. The principles set out in the CMP relating to working with providers of outsourced services do not appear to be reflected in the Grounds Maintenance contract. The site has public transport connections and some provision for cycle parking. The nature of the site means that customer expectations lead to relatively high levels of energy use in some operations, for example the high levels of strimming, with associated energy use in employee transport and fuel usage. The recent re-opening of the Cemetery Chapel is an effective low impact use of an existing built asset
15	Waste minimisation	6	The Council does not have an Environmental or Sustainability Policy and there appear to be no waste recycling facilities on the site. The contract specification requires certain green waste to be composted or recycled, but does not provide for local reuse
16	Chemical Use	7	The Grounds Maintenance contract sets out the requirements for the use of pesticides, but restricts their application and notes that preference is to be given to environmentally friendly products and weed control mechanisms wherever possible. There is a presumption that pests and/or diseases will be controlled through good husbandry and only exceptionally where required through the application of pesticides.
17	Peat Use	3	There does not appear to be any restriction on use of peat in the Grounds Maintenance contract specification
18	Climate Change adaptation strategies	3	The Council has signed up to reducing its carbon footprint, having adopted a Carbon Management Plan, but the plan period expired in 2015 and the Council does not have an Environmental or Sustainability Policy. The principles set out in the CMP relating to working with providers of outsourced services do not appear to be reflected in the Grounds Maintenance contract.

8 BIODIVERSITY, LANDSCAPE AND HERITAGE			
		Score	Comments and reasons for score, covering every heading
19	Management of natural features, wild flora and fauna	9	The value of the site's distinctive grassland ecology is recognised and managed accordingly. This was evident on the day of the survey by the striking range and extent of grassland fungi. The site has a range of trees, grassland habitats and small scale aquatic features which will be of value to wildlife
20	Conservation of landscape features	9	The site's distinctive landscape features – its borrowed views, elevated topography, pattern of trees, monuments and walls make a major contribution to its distinctive character and these are both well conserved and celebrated by the Council and local community
21	Conservation of buildings and structures	8	The Chapel has been sensitively restored and is well and appropriately used for services and by the Friends Group. A number of monuments and memorials have been subject to sensitive repair and restoration and are the subject of educational material and events. However, a number of monuments and memorials are in need of further repair

9 COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT			
		Score	Comments and reasons for score, covering every heading
22	Community involvement in management & development	9	Represented by the Friends Group, the community is actively involved in the day to day operation and strategic direction for the Cemetery. This is reflected in the range of activities, events and volunteer tasks carried out by the Friends. At a strategic level, the Friends group has its own Strategic Plan which is subject to an annual review, and have secured funding for half the cost of the MMP
23	Appropriate provision for the community	9	The site's layout respects different faith needs and is used extensively by the community for events and activities; the Friends Group have an active role in the management and development of the site
MARKETING			
		Score	Comments and reasons for score, covering every heading
24	Marketing and promotion	7	There is no dedicated Marketing Plan covering the Crematorium, Cemetery and Friends' activities, however the Bereavement Services business plan

			contains a number of marketing actions, and the Friends have developed a wide range of marketing/promotional initiatives since their formation
25	Appropriate information channels	9	The Crematorium, Cemetery and Friends' activities are promoted by a variety of different channels, covering a range of audiences and content. These include web, newsletters, social media, publications, signage (temporary and permanent), exhibitions, lectures and walks
26	Appropriate educational and interpretational information	9	Excellent; noticeboards, leaflets, literature, website, walks and talks and provision of permanent and temporary exhibitions in the Chapel

MANAGEMENT			
		Score	Comments and reasons for score, covering every heading
27	Implementation of management plan	N/A	There is currently no Management Plan in place
	Total		
	Average (total divided by 18)		
	OUT OF 100 (Average x 10)		

Score Line

Score	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Quality	Very Poor		Poor			Fair		Good	Very Good	Excellent	Exceptional