

CEMETERY & CREMATORIUM GARDEN GROUNDS MAINTENANCE

# Management Plan 2019 – 2023

Serving the residents of the City of Chelmsford  
for over 100 years in the pursuit of excellence.

To be read alongside Chelmsford's Green Spaces Strategic Framework Document.  
The latter containing the Council's generic policies and procedures.



PROMOTING CITY IMAGE – RAISING THE STANDARD

[www.chelmsford.gov.uk/parks](http://www.chelmsford.gov.uk/parks)

This management plan focuses on the broad aims and objectives set for the grounds maintenance team responsible for grounds maintenance at Chelmsford's Cemetery and Crematorium and covering the period 2019-2023

The management plan is a working reference document which will be used by Chelmsford's City Council's Parks Staff and partners to ensure that aims and objectives are being met effectively insofar as they relate to the grounds maintenance operation.

An action plan is incorporated into this management plan and will be subject to scrutiny and review annually during the month of January.

Information of a more generic nature is not included in this plan but rather it is incorporated in a companion guide entitled 'Strategic Framework for Parks and Green Spaces' which should be read alongside this plan.

A formal business appraisal of the City Council's Bereavement Services function was undertaken in 2012 culminating in the drafting of the Bereavement Services Development Plan by Safer Communities and approved by Cabinet Committee on 11th September 2012. This document maps out the strategic approach for the development and operation of the City Council's Bereavement Services function over a 5-10yr period. To identify and understand the scope for change more fully the reader should consider the impact the Development Plan will have on the service during the life of the Grounds Maintenance Management Plan.

Copies of the Bereavement Services Development Plan can be obtained from the Bereavement Services Development Manager Tel: 01245 605630



## Foreword

One of the principal aims of the Local Authority is to improve the quality of services available to its residents. The primary objective is to provide a cemeteries and crematorium service that meets nationally recognised standards and is delivered in a caring and sensitive manner.

Following the business appraisal Parks & Green Spaces now have a dedicated team working at Chelmsford Cemetery & Crematorium whose job it is to ensure that the gardens in the Crematorium and lawn cemetery are well managed and presented. Previously the entire site was managed and maintained by the Safer Communities directorate but now the Parks Service is effectively a grounds maintenance contractor on their behalf.

It is important that the care and upkeep of such areas are taken seriously and that every effort is made to embrace the needs and aspirations of grieving relatives and friends providing them with a suitable environment to mourn, remember and respect the dead.

It is essential that the cultural, conservation and heritage aspects of this green space is maintained, and that the grounds present a fitting resting place for loved ones who have passed on a long time ago, now and in the future.

We will listen to visitor's comments and will aim to make improvements year on year to make the Cemetery and Crematorium grounds an attractive and respected place where people can come and mourn the memory of departed loved ones.

Local Authorities face their greatest challenge in delivering more with less. With pressure to produce savings whilst delivering key public services councils have to put innovation at the heart of policy and public service design and achieving the best value for money and outcomes for local communities in its delivery of services.

This Grounds Maintenance Management Plan is an important tool in realising those goals. It details the work that has been done and the work which is to be undertaken; it records achievements and aspirations, priorities and possibilities. Also, it helps officers to maintain this space to a high standard for all who visit here for whatever reason.

The plan has been informed by the Bereavement Services Development plan that seeks to map the changes necessary for the Council to take over the coming years to ensure the Cemetery and Crematorium remains a contemporary venue that meets the expectations of the City Council.



**Cllr Bob Massey**  
Cabinet member for Parks & Green Spaces



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## Appendices

### Documents that have influenced the management plan.

- Anti-Social Behaviour Policy
- Customer Service records (Complaints & compliments register)
- Cemetery and Crematorium Regulations -Federation of British Cremation Authorities / Institute of Cemeteries and Crematorium Management
- Index to Cemetery and Crematorium H&S Risk Assessment Documents
- Health and Safety Policy Statement
- Herbicide and Pesticide Policy
- Litter, Waste, and Graffiti Policy
- Writtle Road Cemetery and Crematorium Biodiversity Management Plan
- Guidance Notes for Bats and Trees / Bat Survey
- Local Wildlife Site Survey
- Invertebrate Survey
- Flora Survey
- Environmental Policy Statement
- Building Maintenance work's programme
- Charter for the Bereaved
- Green Flag Criteria
- Grounds Maintenance Budget

### Chelmsford's corporate agenda seeks to deliver quality services. This plan embraces the key aspects of this agenda as they relate to the Council's Cemetery and Crematorium grounds maintenance.

- Making sites accessible & safe
- Achieving quality by design
- Valuing local character & heritage
- Minimising climate change
- Sustaining quality in our environment
- Managing for nature & biodiversity
- Making connections for people & wildlife

## 1.0 Introduction

### Vision for the Cemetery and Crematorium Gardens

The Cemetery was opened in 1887 and over time the grounds have been set out to provide burial and cremation plots for a wide variety of denominations/faiths for the residents of Chelmsford. Today's cemetery covers an area of 10 hectares of land (25 acres). The site has accommodated around 22,000 burials (13,000 graves) since it opened. Nowadays 100-150 burials take place annually consisting of re-opened and new graves plus the burial of cremated remains.

The remaining areas between these facilities have been set aside for general amenity purposes and contains mature trees, shrub planting and annual bedding.

Generally the Cemetery has been laid out to specifically cater for quiet contemplation but now it is used a lot more by local residents for walking, bird watching and as an education resource. Having been a burial site for more than 100 years today's Cemetery is a site of commemoration and as a recreational open space for public enjoyment for those wanting solitude and to experience nature close to the City Centre.

The Cemetery should provide a focal point where loved ones, family and friends can visit which is clean, tidy and quiet.



The Cemetery is also available to provide as much choice as possible to the public in the type of interment and memorials available to them.

The Cemetery represents over 100 years of funeral culture in burial and commemoration of the dead and has a landscape that has evolved by responding to changing demands and expectations of the bereaved and society generally.

In contrast the Crematorium opened in 1961. It offers a choice of services in two chapels, both of which are multi-denominational. Over 2000 cremations take place each year.

In 2011 the Council established a cemeteries task group to assess the management arrangements, grounds maintenance, visitor facilities, buildings and structures and general service provided for the bereaved. As a result of that process responsibility for the grounds maintenance operations and for the grave digging operation moved from Safer Communities (Building Services) to Parks and Heritage Services.

In 2014 the management responsibilities for the Cemetery and Crematorium passed to Chelmsford City Council's Public Places Service, with the grounds maintenance works being managed by the Parks and Green Spaces

To be successful, this Grounds Maintenance Management Plan must become a working tool that priorities, coordinates and implements our agreed objectives. As a working tool the success of the document rests upon the action points, the timetable for implementation and the system for monitoring and reviewing the success of the plan.



**This plan has some key themes for delivering improvements associated with the grounds maintenance delivery in the following key areas:**

**Chelmsford City Council's Bereavement Services is responsible operationally for the Writtle Road site and has its own Service Objectives laid out in the Safer Communities Service Plan.**

**The key objectives being to:**

**Cater for all religions and cultural traditions**

**Provide dignified services**

**Open our Cemetery, Memorial Chapel and gardens every day of the year for visiting**

**Provide fully trained staff with expertise to meet all requirements**

**Be open and informative**

**Maintain the Cemetery and Garden of Remembrance to a high standard all year round**

**Provide comfortable and accessible waiting facilities**

**Accommodate any size of congregation or gathering**

**Offer consultation and choice of service**

**Provide a wide choice of memorials**

**Customer Care** – Maintaining the high-quality service currently provided and making continuous improvements by identifying and responding to customer needs and expectations. (Alongside visitors to the cemetery the views of Funeral Directors, Stone Masons, War Graves Commission are also considered.

**Developing People** – Our staff are the key to our success and, therefore, their development is pivotal to making continual progress in the quality of service provided. This will be achieved through a greater focus on individual learning and development plans for each member of staff combined with an overall plan to ensure skills match service requirements.

**Sustainability** – Environmental performance and sustainable use of the cemetery landscape are equally important to the viability of the cemetery through initiatives such as drought resistant planting and low maintenance features.

**Performance Monitoring** – Is undertaken using four methods of review. Two formal methods are through Green Flag Award and APSE (Association for Public Service Excellence). The City Council also operate a complaint and compliments database that is used to focus on areas for improvement and also to monitor the public's perception of the service being provided to them.

Above all our primary objective is to provide a cemeteries and crematorium service that meets nationally recognised standards and is delivered in a caring and sensitive manner.

**The key objectives have been distilled into a clear vision and ethos for managing the burial and cremation service at Chelmsford Cemetery and Crematorium.**

- Cemetery and Crematorium aims to provide quality bereavement services and subsequent memorialisation.
- The Cemetery and Crematorium aims to maintain the grounds to exemplary standards, to provide a peaceful, pleasant place for people to spend time and to grieve.
- The Cemetery and Crematorium aims to continually improve the service and facilities it provides.
- The Cemetery and Crematorium aims to provide a fully accessible site to all members of the community.

To achieve this vision Green Flag Criteria have been used to create aims and objectives that will ensure that the Cemetery and Crematorium grounds are managed as a quality green space appropriate for the setting.



## 2.0 A brief history

In 1878 the churchwardens of St John's in Moulsham Street approached the local board of health for a grant of land for a new cemetery as its small burial ground was virtually full. The local board was unsure of its powers but in 1882 the Local Government Board confirmed that the local board had responsibility to make sufficient cemetery provision in a rapidly growing district like Chelmsford for its whole population.

In August 1884 the Local Government Board threatened a public enquiry pointing out that the Rectory Lane Cemetery (consecrated in 1856) would scarcely last for 10 years, the New London Road non-conformist cemetery for 20, whilst St John's was full.

Seven sites were explored during 1884. St John's churchyard officially closed in October. In early 1885 six acres on the Writtle road were purchased from Charles Cheveley for £1,100 with loan sanction. The land was divided in half, three acres were let, and with a further loan of £2,670 three acres were laid out as a cemetery by Charles Pertwee in 1886 as a private commission. TL Cloughton, the bishop of St Albans, consecrated the cemetery on 3 August 1886.

**The Cemetery** was conveyed to the Council in 1885 and opened in 1887 with the first burial taking place on 7 January 1887 with the internment being that of a Sergeant Thomas Maples.

Today the cemetery provides new lawn graves, cremated remains plots and a Muslim burial section.

In 1934 a second parcel of land abutting the existing Cemetery land was acquired adding 5.3 hectares to the original 2.5 hectares.

The cemetery is home to the Hoffmann memorial dedicated to those who lost their lives when Chelmsford came under attack during the Second World War. The town was attacked on several occasions, by German missiles. On one occasion, 39 people were killed and a further 140 injured when missiles hit a residential area close to the Hoffmans' ball bearing factory and Marconi electronics factory.

A second parcel of land abutting the existing Cemetery land was acquired in 1934.

### War memorials

The Council has also taken over responsibility for maintaining the memorial in Writtle Road Cemetery. This was dedicated to the memory of workers killed in two raids on the New Street factory of Hoffmann Manufacturing Company Limited during the Second World War.

In addition to the "Hoffmann memorial" the cemetery contains war graves of both world wars. There are 41 burials and commemorations of the 1914-18 war scattered throughout the cemetery. The 1939-45 war burials number 38, of which 32 form a war graves plot in the western part of the cemetery near the adjacent crematorium.

## 3.0 Site Details

**The crematorium**, a much later addition to the cemetery, was officially opened on Saturday 18 November 1961 by the then Mayor, Alderman Mrs J. P. Roberts. At the time, there was only one chapel but a second chapel was built in 1984 to accommodate additional services. The original chapel, known as the South Chapel, was extensively refurbished in November 2011. On average, around 2,000 cremations take place here each year.

Chelmsford Cemetery & Crematorium have records on site showing details of the burials that took place from 7 January 1887 to the present day. We also have records of cremations that took place here from 27 November 1961 to the present day.

If people are searching for the details of someone who was buried in Writtle Road Cemetery in Chelmsford, staff can search our records and help them locate when and where they were buried. A small administrative fee is applicable.

A wide range of memorials are available for families to choose from at the crematorium including living memorials (roses, trees and shrubs), traditional (Book of Remembrance, chapel or florist wall plaques) and personal memorials like Ashes into Glass. The leases for both living and traditional memorials are for 5 years with an option to renew with the exception being the Book of Remembrance which is a one off fee.

Families interested in leasing a bench in memory of a loved one can choose between the Writtle bench made of sustainable solid hardwood, or the Baddow which features a metal frame. The Writtle is leased for 10 years and the Baddow for 25 years with an option to renew on both.

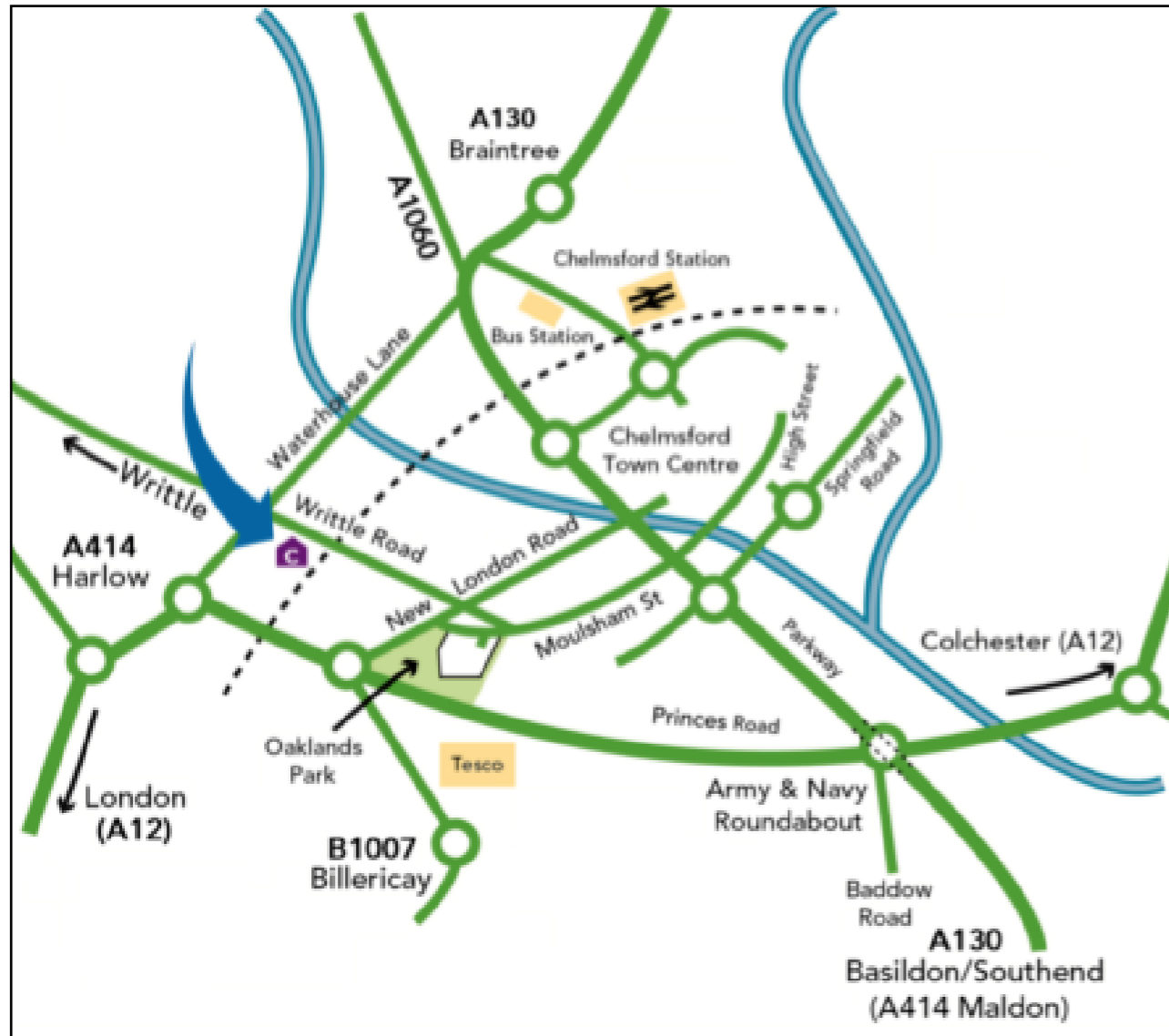
Twice a year a consultative meeting takes place with users of the cemetery and crematorium including funeral directors, memorial masons, ministers and celebrants etc. The purpose of the meeting is to inform our users on any recent developments, to obtain their views and opinions on further developments and to discuss the current services including ways to make improvements. Minutes of the meeting is circulated electronically a week after the meeting.



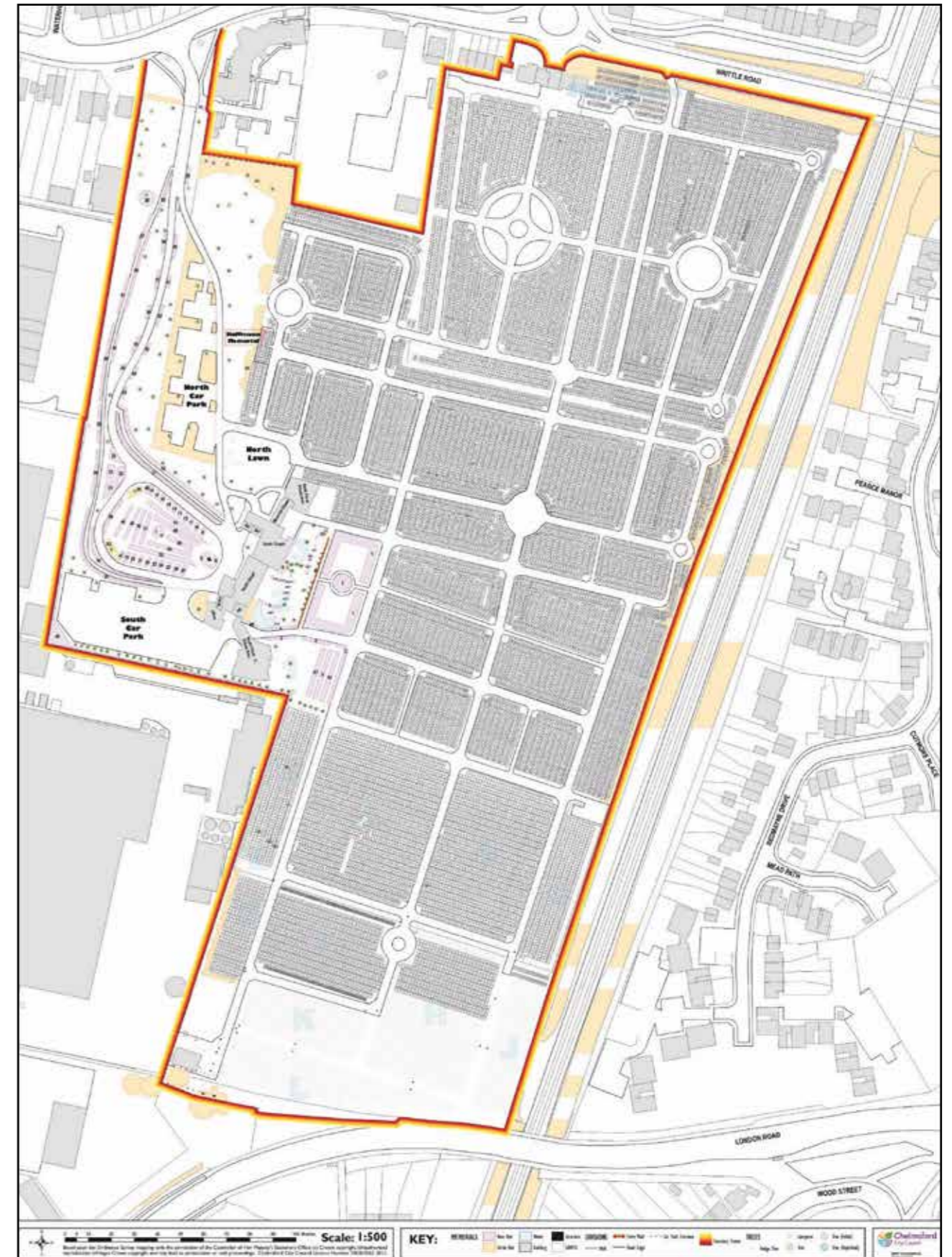
Site Name	Chelmsford Cemetery and Crematorium
Site Status	Burial Ground
Total Area of Site	2.5 hectares purchased 1887 additional 5.3 hectares purchased 1934. 18.75 acres in total (7.8 hectares)
Component areas	Contains areas used in the past for Church of England, Roman Catholic and Non-Conformist burials. In addition there are dedicated areas for cremated remains. Nowadays there is no distinction made on the grounds of religion
Surrounding land	Built up residential and industrial in the immediate environs.
Significant features / Key issues	Free from restriction or encumbrance
Natural Geology	
Tenure	Freehold Two parcels acquired 1887 & 1934
Location	Chelmsford
Ward	Waterhouse Farm
District	Chelmsford
County	Essex
Post Code	CM1 3BL
OS grid reference	UPRN:100090433678 569710 205884
Asset register reference	
Opening Hours	Grounds Opening Hours 01 October – 31 March: Monday-Friday 9.00am-4.00pm Weekends and Bank Holidays 10.00am-4.00pm 01 April – 30 September: Monday-Friday 9.00am-6.30pm Weekends and Bank Holidays 10.00am-6.30pm
Use	Burial site - A total of 100-150 burials take place annually consisting of re-open and new graves plus the burial of cremated remains. The Cemetery accommodates all religions and includes lawn areas, a Muslim burial section and a traditional section used primarily by those favouring traditional memorials.
Contact us	Telephone: 01245 605630 Email: crematorium@chelmsford.gov.uk

Chelmsford (Writtle Road) Cemetery is located on Writtle Road, Chelmsford, between the A138 and the B1007. The post code is CM1 3BL

### Location plan



### Site plan





## Cemetery

The cemetery grounds consist of 7.8 hectares containing areas for Church of England, Roman Catholic and Non - Conformist burials. The Cemetery accommodates all religions and includes lawn areas, a Muslim burial section and a traditional section used primarily by those favouring traditional memorials.

There are also dedicated areas for cremated remains. Cremated remains plots were introduced in 2009 and sales have been growing year on year. The plots provide a longer term memorial for those wishing to have their loved ones interred within the cemetery as opposed to the Garden of Remembrance.

## Accessibility of the Site

### By foot

The access points for the park are marked on the location drawing above. Access is via Writtle Road Chelmsford.

### By road

Access to the site is via Writtle Road. The Cemetery and Crematorium are serviced by two purpose built car parks with dedicated parking spaces for the disabled visitor.

### By private transport

The site has two large car parks providing parking for in excess of 100 cars

### By bus

Chelmsford Crematorium is situated one mile outside Chelmsford city centre in Writtle Road and is served by First Eastern National Bus Route 351. Unfortunately this route is not currently fully accessible and therefore buses do not have a low step for buggy or wheelchair access. When travelling from Chelmsford, the nearest bus stop to the Cemetery and Crematorium is the Old Cemetery Lodge. The journey from Chelmsford city centre takes approximately 10 minutes.

Alternatively, bus route 45 stops at Cherry Tree Corner on the New London Road and bus route 42 stops on Writtle Road. Both are within walking distance of the Crematorium.

## Access within the cemetery

Motor vehicles may be driven only on the designated entry and exit roadways shown on the cemetery and crematorium plan and indicated by signs. They may only be parked in the car parks shown on the plan and no vehicle is to be left in a position so as to cause obstruction on other traffic.

Motor vehicles accompanying burials and those conveying persons with a blue badge holder or mobility impairment may leave the designated entry and exit roadways for parking only as directed

by Council staff. There may be rare occurrences when other vehicles will be asked to use the cemetery roadways for additional parking but only when directed to do so by Council staff.

To ensure the grounds maintain a quiet and peaceful ambiance vehicle movement is restricted.

The Cemetery has a posted speed limit of 10 mph with signs throughout the grounds. The Cemetery was laid out in the early 1900s when vehicles were a rarity and parking was not an issue. Visitors are encouraged to park in the formal car parks only.

## Visiting a grave – managed by Bereavement Services

A map of the cemetery can be obtained from the crematorium office (on site). A member of staff can mark the location of the grave(s) on the map for your reference. Should you wish to visit the cemetery out of office hours, then a map can be forwarded to you by post or email.

## Bringing animals to the site

Animals, except guide dogs and horse drawn hearses, may not enter the Cemetery and Crematorium. Please adhere to the 10 mph speed limits, respect other road users and pedestrians.

## Crematorium

### Arrival

The site has two car parks, both conveniently located close to the crematorium buildings. On the rare occasions when these are full, staff will guide mourners to overspill parking. Most people arrive just before the service starts, but mourners who arrive early can use our comfortable waiting room.

### Waiting area

The waiting room is located in the office building, just past the South Chapel. Seating is provided and the room contains a water cooler for refreshment.

### Chapels and seating

The larger South Chapel seats up to 108, also with extra standing space in its foyer. The North Chapel seats 25 with additional standing room in its foyer. If the service is very large it may be broadcast via loudspeakers to mourners outside. Your funeral director will help you make your choice.

Families of the bereaved are offered a choice of services in either of the two chapels both of which are multi denominational.

### Service times

To ensure an atmosphere of peace, funeral services are timed to start at 60-minute intervals with up to 45 minutes allowed per service. If you need a longer service, more time may be reserved.

## Music

Music often holds special memories and both our chapels are equipped with a Wesley Music System and electronic organs to accommodate your needs. The Wesley music system gives access to a vast library of hymns and recorded music which can be viewed online.

The system offers, at an additional cost, the opportunity to record services onto CD and DVD. For those loved ones that are unable to attend the service in person, the Wesley system can be used to broadcast via the internet. Should you require an organist, musician or soloist to attend, this can be accommodated. A large library of sheet music is available in the office for your use.

## Floral tribute area

A flower tribute area is provided for the display of floral tributes after each service. These are located to the rear of the chapels. Floral tributes are cleared away each Monday morning and include floral tributes from all services which have taken place in the previous week.

## Memorial chapel

The Book of Remembrance and chapel plaques are housed in the Memorial Chapel. Memorial floral tributes can be placed in this chapel. Vases and water are available for public use but vases must remain inside the chapel. This building is located beside the North Chapel.

## Public toilets

Public toilets are located by the North Chapel and adjacent to the South Chapel floral tribute area.

## Disabled facilities

There are several spaces allocated in the car park and wheelchair access is available into and out of the crematorium building. There are disabled toilets at the crematorium. If other assistance is required please contact the crematorium office.

## Funeral teas

For families who wish to have refreshments to be available after the funeral service the Bereavement Service can organise funeral teas through local providers and at the Council's own property at Hylands House.

Over 2000 cremations take place each year operating in accordance with appropriate legislation contained within the Environmental Protection Act 1990. All members of staff operating the cremators have obtained the relevant technical qualifications.

# 4.0 Current Service Provision

## Management arrangements

Whilst the primary reason for developing a management plan is to aid the efficient and effective grounds management of the site by documenting important aspects of the site's continuing maintenance and development.

- Defining priorities for investment and future development.
- Specifying maintenance, security and access arrangements
- Understanding the links between strategic and policy documents and what needs to happen on the ground.
- Ensuring resources are best used to help us achieve our agreed objectives.

The Cemetery and Crematorium grounds are maintained by staff employed by Parks Services (In-house management team). The work is overseen by the Grounds Services Manager who took over responsibility for the Cemetery team in 2013. Work is scheduled within the Cemetery maintenance specification plus a monthly work plan.

A basic work programme is set as a framework within which maintenance is undertaken. The Cemetery's team has delegated authority to supplement this programme in the light of prevailing conditions. This gives the staff greater pride in their work as they have more flexibility over what needs to be undertaken and when they do it.



## Grounds operations in the Cemetery aim to:

- Reduce the use of peat where practical.
- Reduce the use of chemicals and herbicides.
- Encourage the growth of lichens.
- Nurture plants that provide habitats for birds, animals and insects.
- Ensure that the maximum amount of green waste is recycled appropriately.
- Monitor the impact of conservation management regimes on the habitats and flora and fauna numbers.

The grounds maintenance work is being audited using the tried and tested Green Flag criteria to achieve the targets set within the Award criteria.

- A welcoming site
- Healthy, safe and secure
- Well maintained and clean
- Sustainability
- Conservation and heritage
- Community involvement
- Marketing
- Management

### A Welcoming Place

To create a green space which is accessible and inviting to all members of the community. To ensure that the services provided cover all of the local community's needs.

### Health, Safe and Secure

To ensure that staff and members of the public are using a safe, healthy and secure environment.

### Clean and Well Maintained

To ensure that all grounds maintenance and buildings work is undertaken at an appropriate standard so members of the public have a peaceful and pleasant location to remember their loved ones.

### Sustainability

To improve the environmental impact of the Cemetery and Crematorium.

### Conservation and Heritage

To improve the bio-diversity of the area and to ensure that historic features are preserved to the best of our abilities.

## Community Involvement

To continue the current levels of community involvement and research ways in which this can be improved.

## Marketing

To continue promoting the services provided, and research other means of promoting services further.

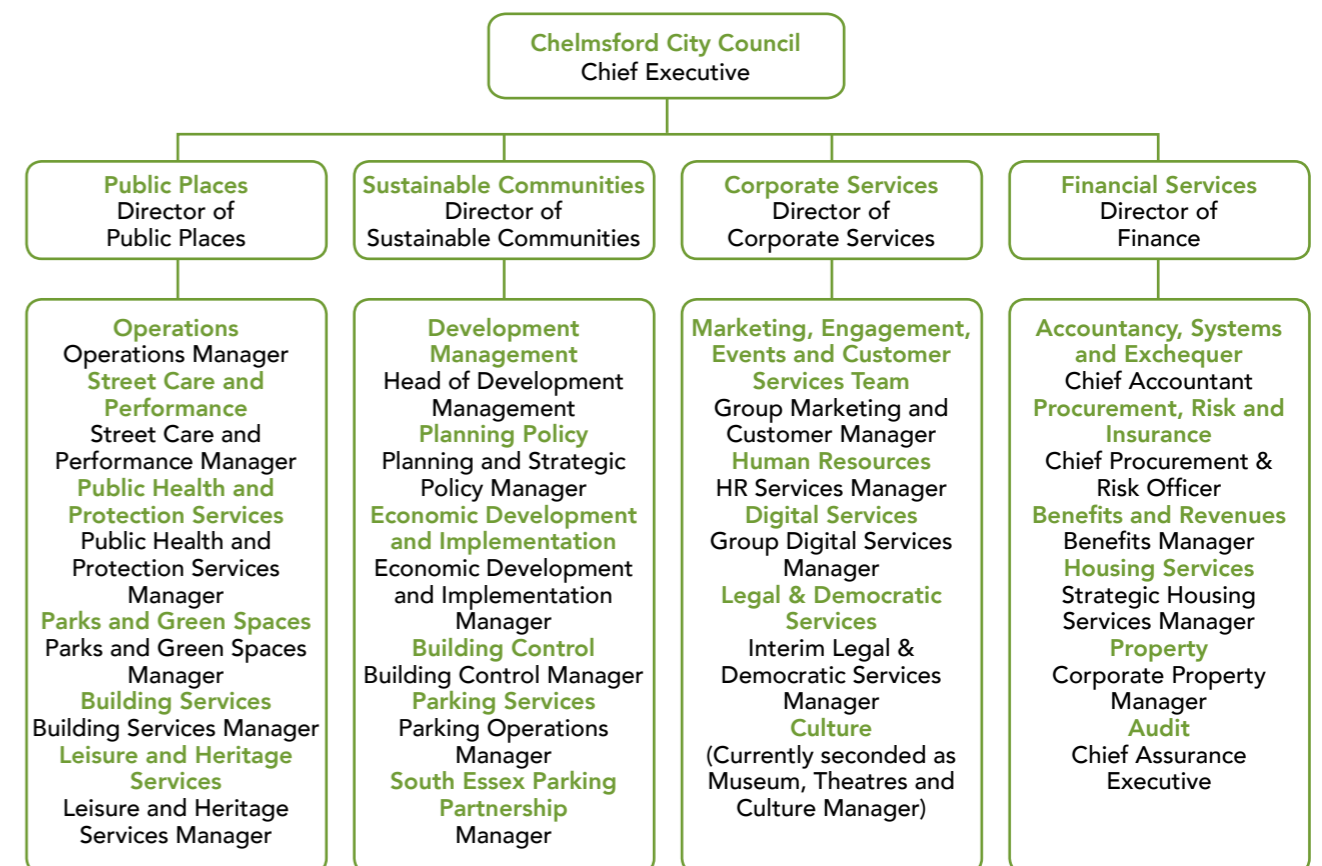
## Management

To ensure that this grounds management plan is used as a positive resource, which can be reviewed to further improve levels of customer service.

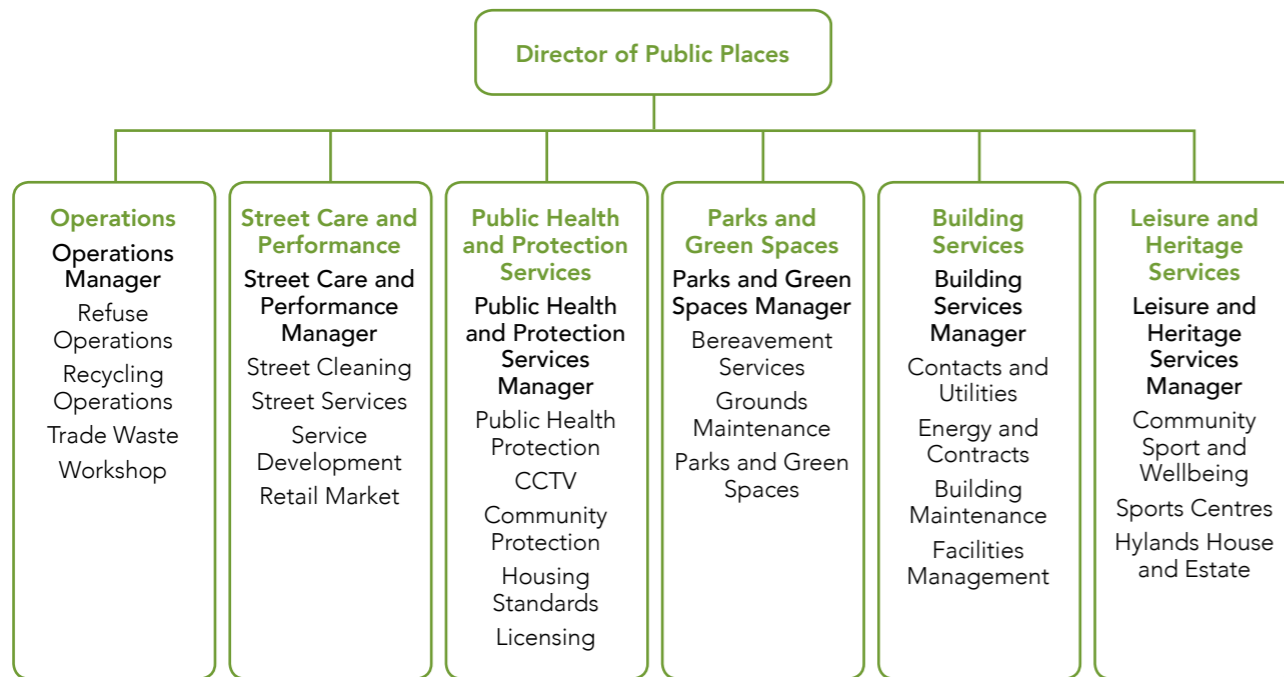
## Staffing and finance

Parks Services Staff & Bereavement Services Staff work together to provide the outward facing service to our customers. Parks staff are responsible for the upkeep of the grounds whilst those employed in the Bereavement Service manage the other aspects of the site.

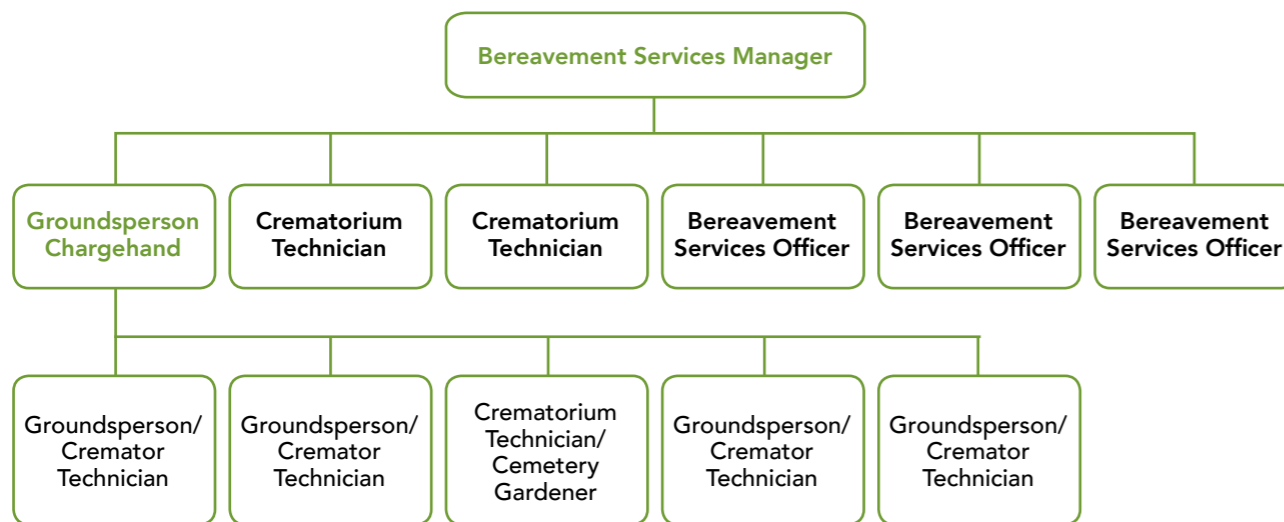
## Chelmsford City Council – Corporate Structure



## Public Places – Structure



## Cemetery and Crematorium Structure



### Sustainable management within the Grounds

The management plan and grounds maintenance specifications reflect the Council's policies listed in the Green Spaces Strategic framework document, as they relate to sustainable land management. The specifications and strategies are important as they guide and empower decision making. Robust written policies in the public realm are a real aid when securing adequate budgets – ensuring council policy is implemented.

### Composting & green waste recycling

Within the grounds there is frequent production of green waste during the normal day-to-day work. All green waste is disposed of into green waste holding area.

Occasionally proprietary brand compost with a known NPK are used when ornamental shrub beds or other horticultural features are renewed or renovated.

Where practical the use of pesticides on roses are minimised through good husbandry techniques. Planting schemes are designed, where possible, to reduce the amount of watering required to maintain a good horticultural impact.

The use of peat products in the Cemetery has been greatly reduced and further improvements are actively being investigated.



## Crematory upgrade

Works to upgrade the crematorium's cremators were completed in September 2011. Approximately £1m worth of work was undertaken to the crematory which included the installation of two new cremators and mercury abatement filtration equipment. As a result of these improvements the Service now complies fully with the requirements of new legislation that came into effect from December 2012. Careful project planning and management meant that throughout the contract at least one cremator remained operational ensuring that the Council was able to continue to provide a local service.

## Crematorium recycling schemes

### Floral Tributes

Where possible any flowers left at the crematorium after a service are re-used. Each Monday, leftover flowers are reused for creating arrangements in both chapels and our reception area. Farleigh Hospice collects arrangements to brighten up their premises for residents.

In addition to this, Chelmsford Cemetery & Crematorium has established a system of composting whereby any remaining bouquets and flowers left in the Memorial Chapel, floral tribute areas and within the grounds are now composted. Additionally, grass cuttings and leaf litter are added in the summer and autumn and it means that there is continually a large ready supply of homemade compost for planting out new rose beds, new trees, pots and beds in formal areas and individual replacement roses.

### Plastics

All plastic collected on site is removed by a third party and reused to produce drainage grilles for the construction and landscaping professions. This plastic includes materials from floral tributes but also large amounts of plant pots and trays that are used both by the public visiting the cemetery, the cemetery staff and the Council's Parks Department which grow plants for the various bedding schemes and borders throughout the City.

### Metal

Memorial plaques are the property of the holder. If they are not claimed following the end of a lease, they are forwarded to a metal dealer - any residual value in the metal is forwarded to a local charity.

Following cremation there may be residual metal items such as orthopaedic implants. Chelmsford Crematorium participates in the Institute of Cemetery & Crematorium Managers (ICCM) national scheme which collects such metal items periodically. Residual receipts are donated to death-related charities such as the British Heart Foundation, Cancer Research UK and local charities such as Farleigh Hospice.

Utilities are monitored centrally on a computerised system that analyses usage of Gas and Electric usage. In 2012 Chelmsford City Council published an Energy and Water Management Policy to drive efficiencies. In 2011 approximately £1 million worth of work was undertaken to the crematory which included the installation of two new cremators and mercury abatement filtration

equipment. As part of this project a heat exchanger was installed to enable water to be heated to supplement or replace the existing gas-fired boilers that provide heating to the office, chapels and ancillary spaces. The Council's Energy Manager is overseeing the monitoring of gas and electrical consumption to identify the most energy efficient operating practices.

## Memorials

Flowers are permitted on new grave spaces but are removed after 7 days to a floral tribute area

The plan recognises the importance of meeting the conflicting needs of the bereaved and the local community and will ensure a balance is reached between different user groups and the potential impact on the natural environment.

Later in 2013 a new set of Cemetery and Crematorium Regulations are to be published. This follows on from the formal business appraisal undertaken in 2012.

The cemetery is an important record of the social history of the area it serves. Its design and layout reflect the fashions of the time when it first opened and the inscriptions on the memorials contain important information about the people who are buried there.

The interment of the cremated remains can take place within the grounds of Chelmsford Cemetery and Crematorium. Cremated remains can be interred by the following means:

- Within the Garden of Remembrance lawn area. This is an unmarked and general area which does not permit memorials
- Near a dedicated memorial such as a rose bush, tree or other living memorial
- In a cremated remains plot in our cemetery
- In a full lawn grave

As general interest in genealogy and family history grows, so does the importance of cemeteries as repositories of biographical information to the wider community.



## 6.0 Biodiversity, Landscape and Heritage

### Ecology / Biodiversity

Ecological features on the site follow the general strategy through parks to protect and enhance wildlife value whilst balancing the needs of the user.

In respect of ecology our aim is to:

- Increase and improve habitat linkages through appropriate targeted planting.
- Increase structural diversity of site.
- Increase species diversity of site.
- Maintain and enhance wildlife interest.
- Enhance habitat for existing biodiversity priority species.
- Provide opportunities for colonisation by additional biodiversity priority species.

The site benefits from a wide variety of flora and fauna and the council wish to develop this further where practical to maintain and enhance the variety of wildlife. Wildlife audits have been undertaken in the past and it is hoped that this resource can be built on.





## 7.0 Site Maintenance Arrangements

### Public Services Directorate

Staff employed in the Bereavement Service manages the site infrastructure.

The majority of buildings within the grounds are subject to annual safety audit reports undertaken by Facilities Management staff. As well as assessing risk, key issues are identified, and scores given within the following categories: security, general safety, fire safety, access, and legionella. A list of regular inspection and preventative maintenance are also provided by the team.

Any actions deemed necessary as a result of surveys are prioritised and acted on accordingly and are compiled into condition surveys which in turn feed into a refurbishment programme usually covering a five-year period. The Architects & Building Surveyors Manager provides design support along with the required reactive and cyclical works whilst the Facilities Manager oversees the forward planning of work within the condition surveys.

The Grounds Staff undertake works in the cemetery and crematorium grounds and have the necessary skill set to undertake a range of horticultural work.

### Trees management

The trees at the site are monitored by grounds staff and any concerns are passed to the councils Conservation and Arboricultural Officer for his further consideration.

Replanting within the grounds is limited to a like-for-like basis, carefully selecting the correct species for the item being replaced. There is scope in the ensuing years to develop a treescape of indigenous trees suitable for the site setting.

### Grasslands

Different mowing regimes are employed within the grounds taking account of the various areas within the cemetery and rose gardens. Formal areas are maintained to a high standard with frequent mowing whilst the margins of the site are maintained for the benefit of native flora and fauna with relaxed mowing regimes and the planting of flowering shrubs and perennials.

### Grounds Maintenance operation

The Grounds Management Service Division of Parks and Green Spaces undertake the grounds maintenance in the grounds; all other aspects are managed by Building Services (Safer Communities)

The landscape elements within both parks have been categorised as follows,

Landscape Type	Minimum expected frequency of operations/year. (Guide only performance specification)
• Grass	
Amenity	Min. 15 cuts
Fine	Min. 25 cuts
Natural	Min. 1 cuts
• Shrub Beds	Min. 9 visits
• Herbaceous Border	Min. 9 visits
• Paving	Min 15 occasions
• Miscellaneous Detail	
Hedges	Min 2 occasions
Trees	Min 3 occasions
Native species plantation	Min 9 visits
Site furniture	Min 2 occasions
• Pond	Min 2 occasions

The specifics of each landscape type are further defined in the work schedules and related where relevant to computer generated work identification sheets that summarises specific operations, the full details of which are contained within the specification.

## Grass Cutting

**Cemetery** Grass cutting in the Cemetery is divided into five different management regimes. These regimes give the different areas their own characteristics, between informal and formal. See plans for cutting regime type.

Prestige grass cutting	
Operation	Frequency/Type
Mow grass	Summer 16
Mow grass	Winter As required
Grass collection	Yes
Mower type	Rotary
Grass edging	16

Open space	
Operation	Frequency/Type
Mow grass	Summer 14
Mow grass	Winter As required
Grass collection	No
Mower type	Cylinder/Rotary
Grass edging	14
Old section of the Cemetery	
Operation	Frequency/Type
Mow grass	Summer 8
Mow grass	Winter As required
Grass collection	No
Mower type	Rotary/Flail
Grass edging	8

All areas in the **Crematorium** are cut using a prestige grass cutting specification in order to create a formal environment. See plans.

### Future Aims:

- To review the grass cutting regimes to enhance nature conservation in designated sections of the Cemetery.
- Minimize the use of chemicals on grass areas as per Herbicide and Pesticide Policy
- To ensure that prestige grass areas are maintained to their best.
- To reduce the amount of grass clippings left on the ground around graves and memorials
- To maintain grass heights at acceptable levels throughout the year (generates most complaints along with grass clippings)

## Shrub and Rose Border Maintenance

**Cemetery** - There is a mixture of shrub and rose borders in the Cemetery. Many of these are scheduled for a staggered refurbishment during autumn periods, as they are coming to the end of their life. Headstones are inter-planted with roses in the lawn memorial areas of the Cemetery.

**Crematorium** - The Crematorium borders runs along the main roadway leading to the Crematorium. This means that all hearses, limousines and mourners to cremation services drive by this border. Due to its high visibility there are plans to undertake regenerative pruning and remodelling of the borders during the life of this plan.

Roses in the crematorium memorial gardens are surveyed every year and replacements are purchased, many of these roses are registered under the memorial scheme administered by Bereavement Services. Currently there are approximately 3,000 roses and living memorials in our gardens.



## Hedge Cutting

All mature hedges are trimmed manually by hand or by hand held hedge trimmers, whilst establishing hedges are pruned with either secateurs or long handled pruners. This gives the hedges a high-quality finish which fits in with the formal surrounding area. Hedges either have their top and two sides cut, top and one side cut or just the two sides cut. All establishing hedges in the Cemetery and Crematorium have their top and two sides cut. The maintenance of a hedge depends on the ownership and its location.

Hedge cutting is not carried out during the spring to allow birds to nest without being disturbed.

Cut formal and establishing hedge	
Operation	Frequency/Type
Cut hedge	Summer 1 (June)
Cut hedge	Winter 1 (October)

### Future Aims:

- To ensure that hedges are cut at appropriate times of the year to prevent nesting birds being affected.
- To ensure the hedges height is safely maintained for grounds staff.

### Inspections and monitoring

All services carried out are subject to regular quality inspections by the Parks Quality Performance Officer.

The area supervisors inspect their sites on a weekly basis. Parks staff inspect the grounds daily. Grounds Management Services are responsible for monitoring their own performance and keeping up to date records of their own monitoring and Inspections, which includes work records relating to their maintenance and work programmes. Routine performance meetings are held on a weekly basis where issues relating to work programmes, quality, performance, health and safety, staffing levels and additional work are discussed.

## 8.0 Health and Safety

As in all the City Council's work places the Cemetery and Crematorium grounds staff work to ensure the requirements of the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 are met. Each member of staff has received Health and Safety induction training and has access to the City Council's Health and Safety document.

The **Green Spaces Strategic framework document** contains all the generic information relating to Health and Safety and should be read alongside this grounds maintenance and management plan.

Risk assessments for all Cemetery and Crematorium activities are regularly reviewed. In addition to health and safety legislation, the Cemetery and Crematorium works within the Local Authorities' Cemeteries Order 1977, the Crematorium Acts 1902 and 1952, the Cremation Regulations 1932 and recent amendments to the Environmental Protection Act 1990. Copies of all risk assessments are kept in the Cemetery and Crematorium office.



## Safety within the Cemetery and Crematorium Grounds

The Parks and Green Space Service have a dedicated work team present in the grounds and along with their gardening duties they also facilitate the following:

- The daily inspection of the grounds incorporates an element of general health and safety review. Damage and faults are recorded and remedial work actioned. The health and safety of visitors is reviewed via the inspection regime in operation.
- Parks staff are able to report anti-social behavior to the police and, and take details of person's descriptions and car registration numbers. Strong links have been forged with both Police Officers and Police Community Support Officers alike.

All staff working within the grounds wear a uniform carrying the Parks and Green Spaces logo.

All items found in the crematorium or cemetery are handed into the Cemetery and Crematorium Office.

## Accidents

Standard Chelmsford City Council accident forms are completed wherever possible to record details of reported incidents.

Staff, both Parks staff and staff from the Bereavement Services staff can aid members of the public and can summon emergency services as necessary. Accidents are reported and recorded at the Cemetery & Crematorium office.



# 9.0 Marketing and Communication

## Marketing and Communication

### Marketing information

Marketing has a key role to play in service development and is key to ensuring the customer's viewpoint is understood and considered. The Cemetery and Crematorium has dedicated web pages providing information of the services available to the public.

The Cemetery and Crematorium office is located next to the main car park and is assessable to the public during the working day. Staff in the office can provide face to face information, information over the phone or by email. A number of brochures are also available informing visitors of the services available.

### Promotion

#### Printed material

Our Brand image is important and is translated on all the printed material the Service produces so that the information is easily identifiable to the general public. This includes banners, posters, leaflets, park notice boards, vehicle livery, uniforms etc.

#### Public Relations

The Service works in association with Corporate Communications and uses various mediums to promote the Service from word of mouth through to local press and media. Press releases are issued regularly. This ensures Parks & Green Spaces is a Service readily identifiable and understood by the general public.

#### Green Flag

The Green Flag Award Scheme providing a 'national standard' for Parks is seen and used as a vehicle to convey the fact of Chelmsford having several stunning parks. Media coverage of this award brings both regional and national recognition to Chelmsford in a very positive way.

#### Fields in Trust

Fields in Trust make annual awards for the best kept playing fields in the country. Within Essex Chelmsford have achieved major successes when submitting playing fields for annual inspection.

### Appropriate information Channels

Press releases to local and national media are managed through Chelmsford City Council News and Media Centre.

The Corporate Communications team responds to all media and press enquiries including consent requests for filming and photography.

Radio interviews: The Service uses all mediums available to it including local radio.

BBC Essex: The Service uses all mediums available to it including TV Broadcasts and use of the BBC Essex Website.

Web site information [www.chelmsford.gov.uk](http://www.chelmsford.gov.uk)

Council publications in the main are organised through Corporate Communications although Park Guides and Events in Parks brochures are arranged by Parks & Green Space marketing.

People are also engaged via the City Council's email and twitter accounts which are regularly monitored.

### Appropriate Education and Interpretational Information

There is enormous opportunity with green spaces for learning about and experiencing ways of enjoying and understanding built heritage and nature, its diversity and its fragility; healthy living, diet and exercise.

It is hoped also that the visiting public will also appreciate the site for its tranquillity and links to nature through its natural landscape setting.



## 10.0 Landscape improvements (2019-2023) 5-year Action Plan

The following analysis of the current day Service provided at the Cemetery and Crematorium helps to refine areas in need of improvement.

### SWAT Analysis – Strengths weaknesses opportunities and threats

#### Strengths

- A long record of service to the people of Chelmsford and the surrounding areas.
- A new city that is growing in size annually
- Attractive and well managed grounds (open 365 days a year)
- Dedicated staff
- Modern cremators and air quality compliant equipment installed in September 2011
- Extended South Chapel accommodating larger services
- Annual Open Day and memorial services
- Very competitive fees and charges
- Able to conduct cremations and burials in one location
- Specialist burial areas – traditional section, Muslim area and multi-faith

#### Weaknesses

- Dated buildings & grounds
- Lack of I.T. systems e.g. BACAS not linked to World Pay, unreliable reporting etc
- Heavily paper-based processes
- Lack of storage
- Limited waiting room facilities – not well used
- Limited amount of burial space remaining
- Not all stakeholders fully engaged in User meetings

## Opportunities

- Commemorations - offer a wider choice of memorials
- Increased demand from a growing population
- Flexibility to meet the needs of partners - funeral directors requesting reduced fees for 'no service' bookings, evening or weekend services
- Ability to generate income through the CAMEO scheme as a result of installing a modern and environmentally friendly crematory
- Plans for partnership working will help achieve key objectives and reduce the level of funding required

## Threats

- Risk of increasing local competition from private providers
- Rising energy costs
- Loss of market position through failure to invest in refurbishment of facilities and gardens
- Failure to invest in land for new cemetery
- New legislation
- Finite space at Writtle Road

## Management issues identified

The following table highlights current key issues relating to the management and maintenance of the Cemetery and Crematorium.

### In order to support the objective of providing a well-managed site, the following projects are proposed during the life of this Plan:

Achieve Green Flag Status

Maintain a Geographical Information System for the Cemetery and Crematorium

Maintain a customer care complements and complaints database

Maintain a staff presence within the grounds

Maintain long term training policy for all staff

### In order to support the objective of providing a welcoming Site, the following projects are proposed during the life of this Plan:

Consolidate style of seats and bins developing a house style for street furniture within the grounds

Introduce actions identified in the conservation plan / biodiversity action plan

### In order to support the objective of providing a healthy, safe and secure Site, the following projects are proposed during the life of this Plan:

Carry out new risk assessments for all new tasks /facilities within grounds maintenance areas

Supply all staff with new uniforms and individual tools as necessary

Maintain a system to document all incidents that take place in the grounds

Maintain a site defect and incident reporting system

### In order to support the objective of providing a well maintained and clean Site, the following projects are proposed during the life of this Plan:

Progressing actions in the 5-year plan

Operate a grounds maintenance management system to schedule and record all maintenance tasks

Progress the repairs and renewals maintenance schedule agreed with Safer Communities Building Services (Premises)

### In order to support the objective of providing a Sustainable Site, the following projects are proposed during the life of this Plan:

Composting of green waste generated in the grounds to be converted to produce a mulch / soil improver

Restrict peat usage within the grounds

### In order to support the objective of providing a Site that addresses conservation and heritage, the following projects are proposed during the life of this Plan:

Introduce actions to promote biodiversity

Create areas of natural habitat within the grounds

Undertake wildlife surveys as a method to determining how maintenance specifications are impacting on biodiversity

Provide public access to records of internments – Family History

In order to support the objective of providing Grounds where community involvement is encouraged, the following projects are proposed during the life of this Plan:

Establish links with Natural History and Heritage clubs/organisations

Promote Service through Open Days and other events

In order to support the objective of providing a well marketed and promoted site, the following projects are proposed during the life of this Plan:

Update and review Parks web pages creating links to Cemetery and Crematorium web pages.

The five-year Action Plan is set out in the tables in the following pages. The plan sets out a series of targets, which respond to the park issues and reflect the park vision and key objectives.

It is not possible to achieve everything at one time so the management plan contains a time frame with expected completion dates. Due to the current economic climate the action plan will be reviewed annually during its lifetime to check on the progress with the agreed actions and to reprioritise against budgets as necessary.

No	Action	Lead Service	Time frame
Objective 1	Develop and retain a team of dedicated, experienced and trained staff and to develop knowledge and skills to meet new challenges.	Public Places: Parks	1-5
Objective 2	Meet the high expectations placed upon the service	Public Places: Parks	1-5
Objective 3	Review Cemetery management plan annually	Public Places: Parks	1
Objective 4	Monitor monthly work programme against Action Plan	Public Places: Parks	1
Objective 5	Work with other local authorities to identify best practices – APSE.	Public Places: Parks	1-5
Objective 6	Review costs of operation as part of the Council's efficiency strategy.	Public Places: Parks	1-3
Objective 7	Continue providing first class service that provides value for money with higher customer satisfaction.	Public Places: Parks	1-5
Objective 8	Continue to undertake wildlife surveys to ascertain what species currently visit the Cemetery	Public Places: Parks	1-5

No	Action	Lead Service	Time frame
Objective 9	Continue to install bird boxes, bat boxes and insect refuge around the site.	Public Places: Parks	1-5
Objective 10	Investigate possible re-use of floral tribute frames with local florists.	Bereavement Services	1-5
Objective 11	Annual tree inspection	Public Places: Parks	1
Objective 12	Annual review of Safe systems of work, Risk assessments and COSHH assessments	Both services determined by specialism	1-5
Objective 13	Promote use of Columbaria for internment of ashes ensuring ongoing capacity is catered for	Bereavement Services	1-5
Objective 14	Ensure that the tree cover is composed of a mixed age range of trees in order to maintain succession and continuity for the future.	Public Places: Parks	1-5
Objective 15	Create wildlife corridors where possible along boundary to the cemetery.	Public Places: Parks	1-5
Objective 16	Identify information and signage needs within the Cemetery Grounds	Bereavement Services	1-5
Objective 17	Monthly mechanised sweeping added to GM work programme.	Public Places: Parks	1-5
Objective 18	Introduce more tree planting to ensure the longevity of the treescape	Public Places: Parks	1-5
Objective 19	Refurbish and enhance Sunken Cross Area		
Objective 20	Coppice sections of the boundary with the railway creating new habitats for flora and fauna.	Public Places: Parks	1-5
Objective 21	Instigate a programme of bulb planting within the grounds	Public Places: Parks & Bereavement Services jointly	1-5
Objective 22	Review requirements for annual bedding within the Crematorium Gardens	Public Places: Parks & Bereavement Services jointly	1-2

No	Action	Lead Service	Time frame
Objective 23	Identify possible locations for a designated children's memorial area 2014/15	Public Places: Parks & Bereavement Services jointly	1-3
Objective 24	Develop a site master plan to include identification of grounds improvements including those of equal access for all customers 2015/16	Public Places: Parks & Bereavement Services jointly	1-2
Objective 25	Explore new ways of engaging with all relevant stakeholders and in relation to the user meetings ensuring minutes are distributed within five working days.	Bereavement Services	1-2
Objective 26	Undertake improvements to car parks and roadways		

### Action plan to promote biodiversity

Operational objective	Outline Prescription
Increase grassland sward diversity	1. Introduce wildflower seed mixtures into grassland.
	2. Cut grassland with a strimmer on rotation annually.
	3. Scrub management, particularly encroaching bramble.
Create deadwood habitat	1. Create log and brash piles
	2. Create stag beetle loggers
Increase species and structural diversity of shrub layer.	1. Management of encroaching bramble by cutting back.
	2. Plant new areas of native fruiting shrubs including hazel, hawthorn and blackthorn.
	3. Manage scrub to create a graded edge between grassland and shrub layer.
	4. New shrub planting to be managed as coppice on a rotational cycle.
Provide increased basking spots for reptiles and other animals	1. Create ridges and mounds in several locations to provide south facing slopes.
	2. Plant ridges and mounds with wildflower seed mix to provide reptiles with cover and food for invertebrates.
Biodiversity recording	1. On-going day-to-day recording of species sightings.
	2. Monitoring of slow-worm population.

## 11.0 Management: Monitoring and Review

The targets identified in above action plans have to be considered in continuum and therefore are regularly reviewed. Responses, solutions and remedial actions may be implemented in the short term.

**Green Flag Judges Feedback** – The annual application to the Green Flag Award is in itself a quality monitoring tool, providing the motivation for the grounds staff to improve each year and a guide to improving management practices. Green Flag now forms part of the local performance indicator set and in itself provides a further objective assessment.

### Commissioned survey reports

- Market and Opinion Research International (Mori) 2013
- Parks and Green Space Strategy



## Bench Marking

Parks and Green Spaces Service pursue benchmarking with an Essex Practitioners forum:- the Parks Managers meeting regularly to share ideas and develop policies and strategies for park management and maintenance, and to respond to changing needs.

Chelmsford's Parks and Green Spaces Service are also members of Association of Public Service Excellence. (APSE)

**Annual review** – The management plan is a live tool which is subject to regular review and updating. The action plan is updated annually, with a full review of the management plan taking place at least every five years.

**Stakeholder involvement** – Stakeholders will be consulted and involved in the management of the park during the life of the Plan, particularly in relation to proposed park improvements, and at the five-year review.

## Summary of recent achievements

The achievements detailed above are good examples of initiatives over the past five years that demonstrate Bereavement Services' achievements:

- A clear focus on being a venue of choice providing a sensitive service that is tailored to meet the varied needs of our customers
- Becoming more environmentally focused with the introduction of successful recycling schemes and the recent cremator upgrade.
- Improving customer choice from enhanced memorials and an extended South Chapel able to accommodate larger services.
- Creating greater external awareness of the service and our facilities through marketing and involvement of bereaved families in memorial days.
- Recent Open days for Cemetery & Crematorium

**Author: Mike Keen ex 6725**



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Chelmsford City Council  
Civic Centre  
Duke Street  
Chelmsford  
Essex  
CM1 1JE

Telephone 01245 606606  
Fax 01245 606970  
Mike.Keen@chelmsford.gov.uk  
www.chelmsford.gov.uk/parks

Produced by Mike Keen

