

Hirst Wood Burial Ground Management Plan, 2019 - 2021

Introduction

The land is owned by St Paul's Church and the management is the responsibility of the Hirst Wood Burial Board, a sub committee of the Parochial Church Council (registered charity 1169596).

The consecrated burial ground extends to approx. 6 acres. Roughly half is terraced and contains bricked graves (burial ground) the remainder is open woodland.

The whole area is within the boundaries of Hirst Wood for the purposes of Tree Preservation Order No 0938 giving blanket protection.

Since regular burials ceased in the 1980s, Hirst Wood Burial Ground has developed into an ecologically rich woodland habitat. The Church recognises the value in allowing habitats to develop to create a natural green space that offers to home to wildlife as well as a place to pay respects and for contemplation.

Certain graves are maintained by the Commonwealth War Graves Commission to their normal standard.

Aims

To manage the maturing woodland whilst ensuring there is safe access through the burial ground and amongst the graves.

To maintain a burial site that is managed sympathetically to both the graves within and the ecology of the site.

To manage the site sustainably, working with nature and only intervening when necessary (the intention is not to manage the burial ground as a garden which it is considered would require an unsustainable level of maintenance).

To ensure, as far is reasonable, safety to the public walking through the open woodland.

Legislation

- There is a Group Tree Preservation Order in place in the Burial Ground. The Board will seek permission for felling work to be undertaken
- All works will comply with relevant legislation eg that relating to breeding birds and bats.

Key work items

- Keeping pathways clear and accessible to allow visitors to pass along freely and visit some of the graves.
 - Keep paths clear of vegetation
 - Keep all grave inscriptions free from vegetation growth (vegetation including moss/lychens will remain on grave plots and unscribed edging stones
 - Cut bramble back to a distance of approximately 0.5m from path edge
 - Clear litter

- Manage the trees in the Burial Ground by coppicing a selection each winter. The aim is to create an open canopy so sunlight is reaching the ground, choosing to retain a mix of species for interest and wildlife value.
 - The Board will identify which trees are to be retained and which should be removed. This may involve choosing to fell some of the larger willow as these are the most numerous larger trees and if left will limit the range of species.
 - Most of the trees to be removed can be tackled with hand saws or loppers, cutting the trees close to the ground
 - Larger trees will need to be felled by chain saw.
- Control non-native invasive species
 - Employ licensed company/individual to undertake a programme of spraying/injection of herbicides to eradicate Japanese knotweed.
 - Eradicate Himalayan balsam through pulling by hand.
 - Eradicate rhododendron and cherry laurel through felling.
- Carry out a botanical survey.
- Carry out a bryophyte (mosses and lichens) survey.

Who will undertake the work?

The expectation is that the majority of work will be carried out by volunteers, with support of professional tree surgeons for larger trees or in the case of an immediate response required if the site becomes unsafe. All work is subject the approval of the Board.

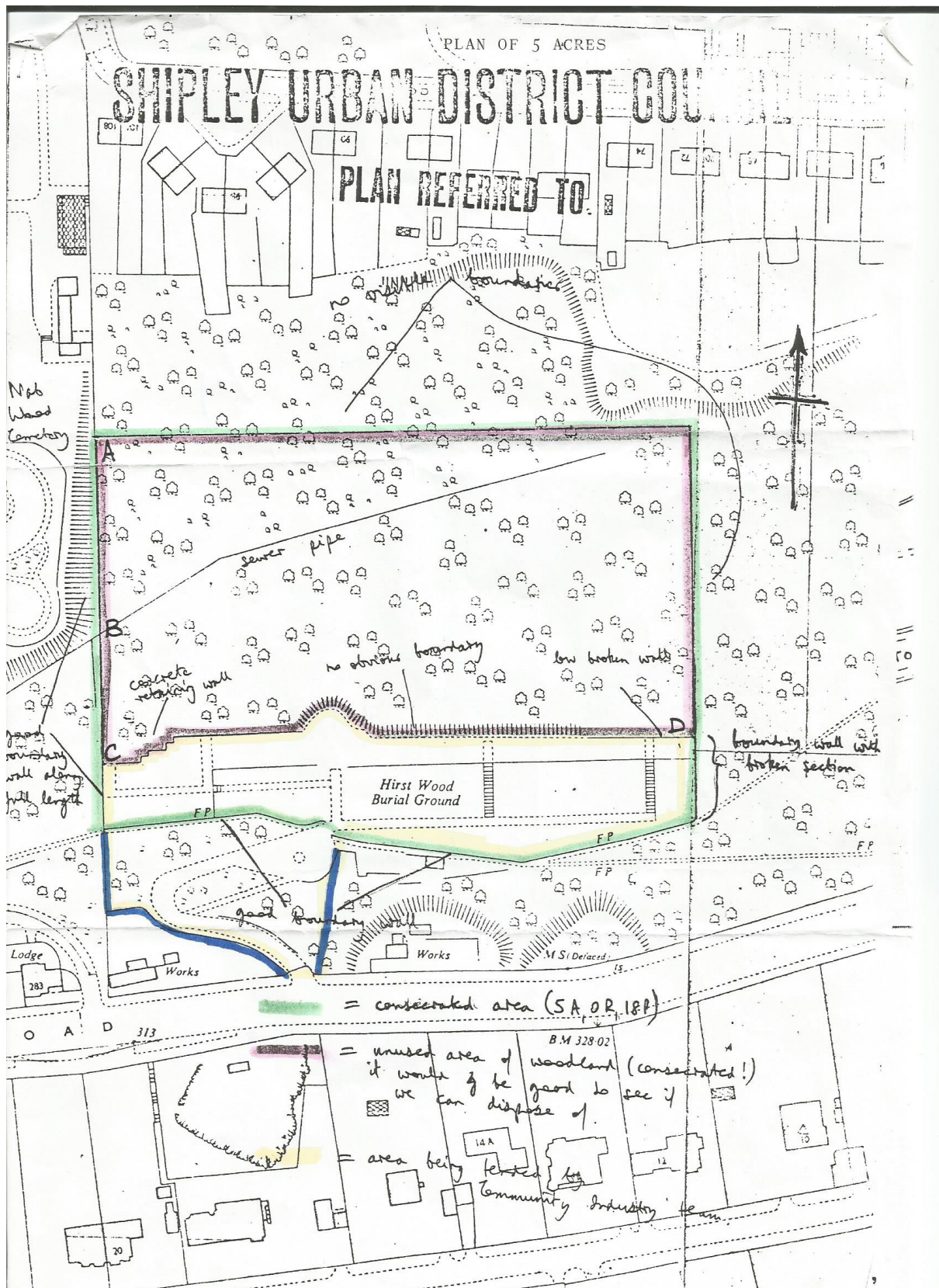
- Church groups, local volunteers such as Hirst Wood Regeneration Group,
- Managed volunteer groups such as BEES (Bradford Environmental Education Service, part of Bradford YMCA), Forest of Bradford (BEAT).
- Tree surgeon businesses.

Timing of work

- Planned woodland work should be carried out between November and Feb/March. Work may be required at other times if safety is at risk by e.g. a fallen bough.
- Undergrowth, scrub and trees should not be disturbed during the bird nesting season; 1 March to 31 August.
- Pathways can be maintained all year round, as long as potential nesting places are not disturbed.
- Work is not normally undertaken on Sundays.

Appendix 1

PLAN



Appendix 2

Known species - trees and wildlife

Work is currently being carried commissioned to gather data.