General Cemetery Management Plan 2026-2028



Post Code: NG1 5JD

Co-Produced By Greenspace & The Natural Environment and Bereavement Services

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Nottingham General Cemetery Management Map



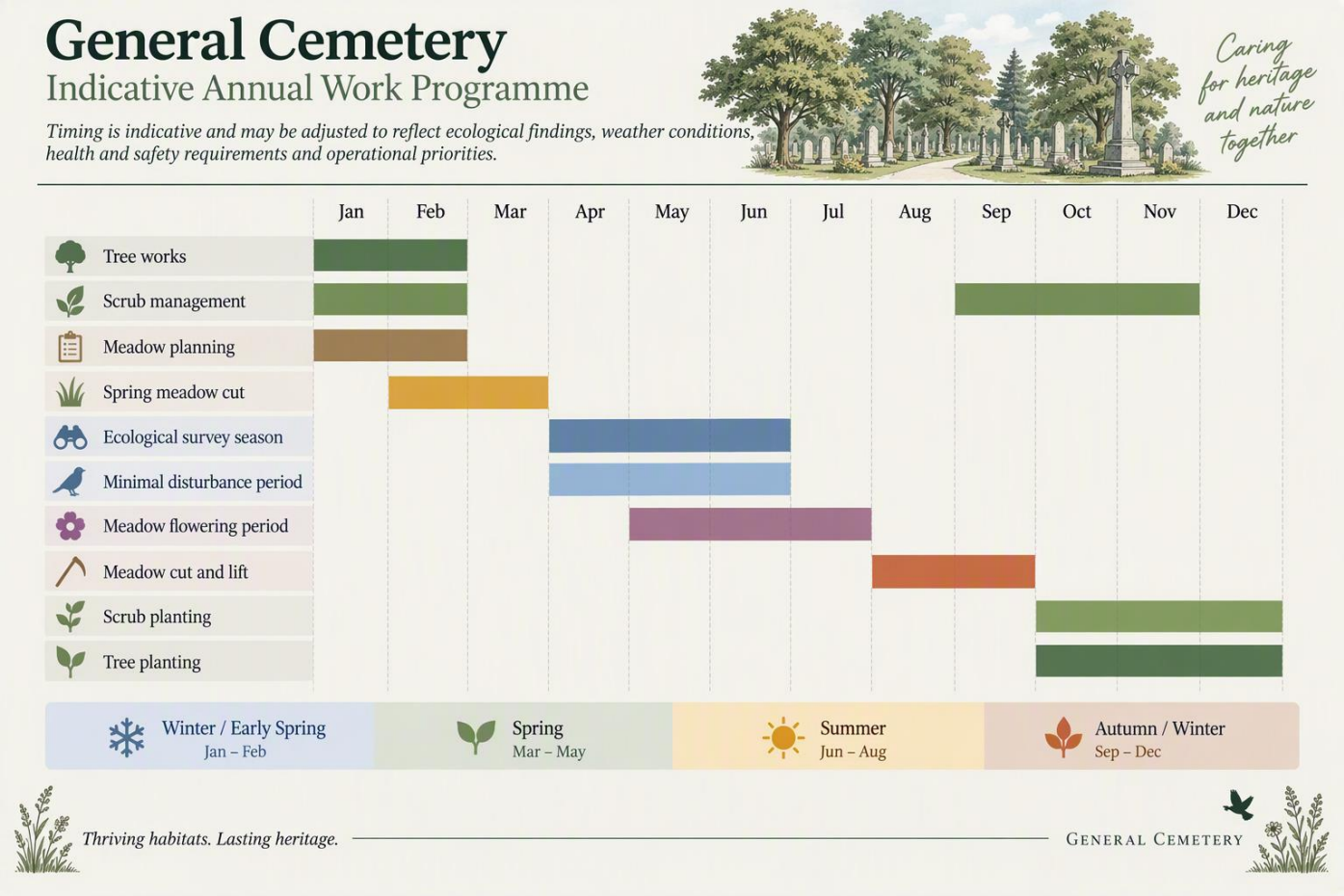
Key

Habitat Management Zone

- Ecological Protection Areas
- Hardstanding
- Lawn Areas
- Scrub Areas

- Trees and Veteran Tree Areas
- Walls, Headstones and Historic Structures
- Wildflower Meadow Areas
- Woodland/Scrub Edge Areas
- Nottingham City Boundary

Annual Programme of Works



Management Plan Summary

General Cemetery is one of Nottingham's most important heritage and environmental assets, designated as a Local Wildlife Site and containing a significant collection of historic memorials, structures and landscape features. This management plan provides a framework for balancing biodiversity conservation, heritage protection, memorial safety, public access and the Council's ongoing stewardship responsibilities between 2026 and 2028.

Through a zoned management approach, the plan seeks to protect and enhance the site's ecological value, historic character and landscape features while maintaining a safe, accessible and respectful place of remembrance. It supports the Council's Biodiversity Duty and promotes proportionate, evidence-led management that safeguards the long-term environmental and heritage significance of the site.

General Cemetery Overview

General Cemetery is a Grade II Registered Park and Garden of Special Historic Interest and designated Local Wildlife Site (LWS), supporting a wide range of habitats including species-rich grassland, mature trees, scrub, historic walls and memorials.

This management plan sets out the biodiversity priorities and management actions for 2026 to 2028. It provides a framework for integrating habitat conservation with heritage protection, public access, memorial safety, tree management and the Council's ongoing statutory and stewardship responsibilities. The plan supports

Nottingham City Council's Biodiversity Duty and contributes to the delivery of the Nottinghamshire and Nottingham Local Nature Recovery Strategy.

Recommended Ecological Surveys

Initial ecological surveys identified a range of important habitats and species requiring further assessment to inform future management and enhancement proposals. A subsequent survey has been undertaken in September 2026 to map Autumn Crocus populations. The following surveys are recommended:

- Spring 2027: Survey and record woodland and shade-tolerant flora.
- Summer 2027: Update grassland species inventories and vegetation classification.

Survey findings should be used to refine future management prescriptions, identify priority areas for protection and guide habitat enhancement proposals. Until these surveys are completed, no grassland seeding or wildflower establishment should be undertaken within designated management areas to ensure existing ecological interest is fully understood and protected.

Why is the General Cemetery a Designated Local Wildlife Site?

General Cemetery was designated as a Local Wildlife Site because it supports a locally important combination of ecological, historic and landscape features. Key features include:

- Species-rich grassland and notable wildflower communities.
- Significant populations of Autumn Crocus, a Nottinghamshire County Scarce species.
- Mature trees, scrub and structurally diverse habitats.
- Historic walls, memorials and stonework supporting specialist flora and fauna.
- Habitat supporting birds, bats, badgers and invertebrates.
- A valuable component of Nottingham's urban ecological network.

The site has also been identified as supporting delivery of wider Local Nature Recovery Strategy objectives through the conservation and enhancement of urban green infrastructure and associated wildlife habitats.

Site Biodiversity Objectives

Management decisions should seek to:

1. Maintain and enhance the habitats and species that underpin the site's Local Wildlife Site designation.
2. Protect and improve species-rich grassland and other priority habitats.
3. Safeguard notable species populations and improve ecological understanding through ongoing monitoring and survey.
4. Increase habitat diversity through the retention and creation of meadow, scrub, woodland edge, standing deadwood and log pile habitats.
5. Support pollinators, birds, bats and other wildlife through sensitive and evidence-led management.
6. Integrate biodiversity considerations into routine cemetery operations, maintenance programmes and future capital works.

Biodiversity Management Principle

General Cemetery is a designated Local Wildlife Site that supports a range of important habitats and species. Biodiversity management forms an integral part of the Council's wider stewardship of the site. Public safety, memorial management, heritage conservation and accessibility remain key considerations, and biodiversity management should be integrated into routine maintenance and management activities wherever practicable.

Local Wildlife Site designation does not prevent essential management, maintenance, conservation or safety works from taking place. Instead, ecological considerations should be identified at an early stage and balanced alongside heritage, operational and health and safety requirements, ensuring that the least damaging practicable approach is adopted wherever possible.

Heritage Management Principle

General Cemetery is a Grade II Registered Park and Garden of Special Historic Interest and contains a wide range of designated and non-designated heritage assets, including historic memorials, monuments, boundary walls, pathways, structures and landscape features. The preservation and conservation of these assets forms an important part of the Council's stewardship responsibilities.

Heritage considerations should be identified at an early stage and balanced alongside biodiversity, accessibility, operational and health and safety requirements, ensuring that the most proportionate approach is adopted wherever practicable.

Targeted vegetation management, maintenance and conservation activities may be necessary to:

- Protect memorials and monuments.
- Protect walls, railings and other heritage structures.
- Maintain the historic character and setting of the cemetery.
- Allow access for inspection, maintenance, conservation and statutory safety checks.

The Council's approach is to balance heritage conservation, biodiversity enhancement, public access, memorial safety and operational requirements through planned and proportionate management, ensuring the long-term protection of the cemetery's historic significance while maintaining a safe, accessible and dignified environment for visitors and the bereaved.

Heritage Objectives

Management decisions should seek to:

- Protect and conserve the Grade II Registered Park and Garden.
- Maintain the condition of historic memorials, monuments, structures and landscape features.
- Ensure heritage assets remain safe, accessible and capable of inspection and maintenance.
- Balance heritage conservation with biodiversity enhancement, public access and memorial safety.
- Preserve the character and significance of the cemetery for future generations.

Legal and Operational Considerations

Management activities must take account of relevant legislation and Council policies, including:

- Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended)
- Protection of Badgers Act 1992
- Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended)
- Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006
- Environment Act 2021 Biodiversity Duty
- Nottingham City Council Tree Policy (2025)
- Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974
- Occupiers' Liability Acts 1957 and 1984
- Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999
- Local Authorities' Cemeteries Order 1977 (LACO)
- Burial Acts 1852 to 1906
- Local Government Act 1972
- Equality Act 2010
- Building Act 1984
- Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979 (if applicable)
- Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (if applicable)

Memorial Safety (Headstones & Monuments)

- British Standard BS 8415 (Memorial Safety)
- NAMM (National Association of Memorial Masons)
- BRAMM (British Register of Accredited Memorial Masons)

Early engagement with Biodiversity Officers is encouraged where works may affect habitats, protected species or other designated features. Local Wildlife Site designation is non-statutory and does not prohibit operational works. However, management decisions should seek to avoid unnecessary harm to designated features and demonstrate that ecological constraints have been considered when determining the most appropriate course of action.

Protected Species and Sensitive Habitat Areas

Protected species are known or likely to be present across the site due to the diversity of habitats it supports. Management activities must take account of these species and their habitats. Where necessary, ecological surveys, pre-works checks, mitigation measures or seasonal restrictions will be implemented to ensure legal compliance and avoid unnecessary impacts on wildlife.

The site also supports significant populations of Autumn Crocus, a Nottinghamshire County Scarce species that contributes to the site's ecological importance. Areas supporting mapped Autumn Crocus populations should be protected from inappropriate mowing, storage of materials, vehicle movements and scrub encroachment. Management of these areas should be informed by ongoing survey work, monitoring and ecological advice to ensure the long-term conservation of this notable species.

Habitat Management Zones

The cemetery should be managed using a zoned approach; management intensity should reduce progressively from formal lawn areas towards ecological areas:

Zone	Primary Purpose	Management Prescriptions
Lawn Areas		
	**Formal appearance, visitor access and operational use**	Manage as amenity grassland through regular mowing during the growing season. Maintain clear sightlines, access routes, memorial surrounds and operational areas.
Wildflower Meadow Areas		
	**Maximising biodiversity and botanical interest**	Manage through an annual meadow cutting regime with an early February cut and collect, followed by no further cutting until late summer/early autumn. Cuttings should be removed after approximately 48 hours to allow seed dispersal. Herbicide use will not normally be permitted within these areas. Vegetation management in the form of breed lines, access routes and areas around headstones can be utilised in these areas.
Scrub Areas		
	**Nesting habitat, shelter, foraging opportunities and structural diversity**	Retain and manage selected scrub areas to provide habitat for birds, mammals and invertebrates. Prevent scrub encroachment into species-rich grassland and meadow areas. Enhance retained scrub through the planting of appropriate native species where opportunities arise.
Woodland/Scrub Edge Areas		
	**Transitional habitat supporting a diverse range of species**	Maintain a varied woodland edge structure through selective management of scrub and young trees. Retain a gradual transition between woodland, scrub and grassland habitats to maximise biodiversity value. Avoid creating dense, uniform boundaries wherever possible.

Habitat Management Zones Continued

Zone	Primary Purpose	Management Prescriptions
Trees and Veteran Tree Areas		
	**Veteran tree conservation and invertebrate habitat**	Continue routine tree inspections and safety management. Retain veteran tree features (Tree-related Microhabitats (TreMs)) wherever safe to do so, including cavities, cracks, loose bark, standing deadwood, fungal fruiting bodies and exposed heartwood. Retain felled timber and deadwood habitat within suitable locations where operationally appropriate. Replacement stock will be planted in suitable locations to maintain canopy cover, support succession and secure the long-term ecological value of the site.
Ecological Protection Areas		
	**Protection of sensitive species and habitats**	Areas supporting sensitive features of ecological interest should be subject to minimal disturbance. Access should be limited to essential management, inspection or health and safety works, with advice sought from Biodiversity Officers where appropriate.
Walls, Headstones and Historic Structures		
	**Conservation of specialist wall flora and heritage assets.**	Continue routine inspection, maintenance and safety works. Retain specialist wall flora and associated habitats wherever safe and practicable. Avoid unnecessary vegetation removal and minimise herbicide use on walls, memorial structures, retaining walls and other historic features. Significant works should seek to avoid unnecessary damage to ecological features associated with the Local Wildlife Site designation

Vegetation Management

The Council adopts an integrated vegetation management approach that seeks to reduce reliance on herbicides wherever practicable through mechanical methods, appropriate planting and other ecological management techniques. Herbicide use is regularly reviewed and will be minimised within low-management and biodiversity-focused areas wherever practicable. Alternative management approaches will be used where feasible and proportionate.
Targeted herbicide use may be necessary where:

- Control of invasive non-native species listed under Schedule 9 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 is required.
- Vegetation is causing, or is likely to cause, damage to infrastructure, memorials or other assets.
- Vegetation management is necessary to protect sensitive habitats or support the conservation objectives of the site.
- Vegetation is affecting the stability, condition, inspection or maintenance of memorials, monuments and grave markers, creating potential safety, accessibility or heritage risks.
- Vegetation is causing, or is likely to cause, damage to historic structures and heritage assets, including listed monuments, boundary walls, historic railings, vaults and other features of cultural or architectural significance.
- Vegetation growth is adversely affecting the condition, stability or visibility of the Grade II listed cemetery landscape and associated heritage features, requiring intervention to support their long-term preservation and conservation.
- Vegetation is affecting retaining structures, boundary walls or other built heritage features where management is required to prevent deterioration, maintain structural integrity or allow inspection and monitoring.
- Vegetation is restricting access for inspection, conservation, maintenance or statutory safety checks required to ensure the cemetery remains safe, accessible and fit for purpose.

Any herbicide use must be proportionate, targeted and undertaken in accordance with relevant legislation and Council policies.

Opportunities for Enhancement

Whilst the priority of this plan is to maintain and enhance the features that underpin the site's Local Wildlife Site designation, opportunities exist to further increase biodiversity value across General Cemetery. Following completion of the recommended ecological and botanical surveys, opportunities may be identified to enhance grassland management, expand species-rich habitats and strengthen ecological connectivity across the site. Existing populations of Autumn Crocus and other notable plant species should continue to inform future management decisions and habitat enhancement proposals.

Additional opportunities may include the creation of small areas of bare ground for ground-nesting bees and other invertebrates, targeted pollinator habitat improvements, native scrub establishment, retention of log piles and deadwood habitats, and increasing structural diversity through the management of grassland, scrub and woodland edge habitats.

The cemetery's historic landscape also presents opportunities to deliver biodiversity enhancement alongside heritage conservation. Habitat improvements should, wherever practicable, complement the protection and appreciation of historic memorials, monuments, boundary features and other heritage assets.

Opportunities for volunteer, community and educational involvement should be explored where appropriate, helping to support biodiversity enhancement, heritage conservation and public engagement with the cemetery's natural and historic significance. All enhancement works should complement existing ecological features and be informed by survey findings, operational requirements, heritage considerations and site management priorities.

Document Control

Revision date	Version number	Author of changes	Summary of changes
September 2026	0.1	Jemma Maguire & Harriet Thomas	Initial draft prepared.
September 2026	0.2	Jemma Maguire & Ken France	Site-specific management zones, vegetation management requirements and annual work programme refined following internal review
September 2026	0.3	Ken France	Draft reviewed and updated to strengthen the heritage, biodiversity, safety, legal and operational content, plain English update.
October 2026	0.4	Jemma Maguire & Harriet Thomas	Final draft reviewed and amended, with the seasonal programme of works, habitat management overview and zonal mapping now incorporated.
14th October 2026	1.0	Jemma Maguire & Ken France	Final version approved for implementation and publication.