**All Saints Churchyard**

**Our management aim is to create:**

* **a safe, accessible and financially sustainable memorial ground for God’s people**
* **a wildlife haven and semi-natural habitat in which God’s creation can flourish**
* **a place for quiet and personal contemplation, the enjoyment and study of nature and the wider landscape and historic environment.**

We want to manage the churchyard to maintain a sympathetic balance between its functions as a (closed) burial ground, a home for wildlife and a semi natural greenspace for visitors to enjoy. This is a dynamic process which will evolve over time.

We need to be aware of issues of public health and safety such as the stability of memorials, the health of mature trees, the maintenance of path surfaces and the control of noxious plants. We must be aware that visitors may be in the churchyard at any time when we are working, especially with machinery. Risk assessments must be undertaken and suitable precautions used at all times. All safety concerns should be reported to the church wardens.

We will treat all memorials with respect and maintain some level of accessibility whilst recognising that this does not mean that all grave plots have to be kept clear of surface vegetation. Where visitors to grave plots tend them in a certain way we will work sympathetically with these wishes.

We will compost soft green waste wherever possible. The compost heap will be properly managed to avoid a build-up of material and to create a usable resource.

We will provide and maintain waste bins, collect and dispose of all litter and periodically remove non-compostable waste such as faded artificial flowers and Christmas Wreaths etc.

We hope to provide some on site information boards about the churchyard, it’s management and features of interest and will also provide information on the church website and through periodic features in the village news letter. Please take time to stop and talk to visitors who show an interest in our work.

**There are four main management zones:**

**Zone 1 (Yellow) : Closer mown paths and lawns:**

First cut late Feb - early March gradually lowering cutter after second cut. Cutter height can be adjusted according to area, eg main path surfaces and areas at front of church closer mown, borders and rougher ground to north at medium. Repeat cuts every 10 – 14 days until mid – late Sept. All cuttings removed and composted

**Zone 2 (Pink) : Spring (hay) meadow**

No cutting through early season to let spring flowers grow on and set seed. Strim off mid-June, allow arisings to lie / dry for a few days to let seed drop then rake off and compost (or could be given away as hay for pet bedding). Cut at medium to maximum height every 2 – 3 weeks until mid – late Sept. Selectively retain uncut vegetation around base of some memorials. Cuttings removed and composted.

**Zone 3 (Blue) : Single Autumn cut**

Strim off between graves once a year in mid – late August after main summer wildflowers have dropped their seed then allow arisings to lie / dry for a few days to let seed drop and rake off and compost. Curbed graves to be hand weeded / selectively cut. Doesn’t all have to be done in one go. Some areas can be left for several years between cuts.

**Zone 4 (Green) : Woodland / Scrub / hedges**

Maintain as an open mosaic of canopy to give a mix of sunlit / dappled shade / deeper shade areas. Hedge cutting and tree work to be done in winter and should stop between early Feb and late August to avoid disturbance to nesting birds. Ground cover and arboreal ivy to be retained but it can be removed from memorials (especially the front face). Retain some standing dead wood where safe to do so. Create some small (dead wood and stone) habitat piles.

