



Friends of Woodbury Park Cemetery



The Gardening Team's report for 2021

In spite of another year of Covid hanging over us and a disappointing year weather-wise, with the help of interesting articles in The Town Crier in April and July we had an encouraging number of appreciative visitors throughout the year.

In May, to our great relief, the long-awaited shed arrived - flat-packed, but two of our trusty Friends set to and got it up in record time. It even has a bench so all tools and equipment are tidy and easy to access. After 12 years of struggling to get heavy tools up and down a bank and over a local garden wall when one has just finished three or four hours gardening, it is easy to understand how much the shed is welcome. As can be seen we have planted evergreen honeysuckle against the shed which we hope will climb rapidly and camouflage its presence. These plants were thoughtfully given to us by a most-valued well-wisher.



The honeysuckle apart, we have had a busy year planting; first of all came the hazel hedge, along the section of the wall parallel to Park Road, which in a year or two, we hope will begin to screen the parked cars and unsympathetic development beyond. Although not an extensive hedge it will in time, offer shelter for birds, as do the very successful hedges we have already planted, namely the Grosvenor hedge and the Warehouse hedge. Close to this new hazel hedge is a beautiful, self-sown area of foxgloves. We have also increased the number of alder buckthorn plants in the Chapel Meadow and a planted a few in the Grosvenor hedge.



Foxgloves

One day a gardening volunteer walking along a local road noticed a rosemary plant, in full bloom and attracting bees, hanging over a garden wall and immediately saw its possibilities for the Cemetery. Quite by chance the owner of the property was one of our Friends and became similarly enthusiastic. We now have two tombs where prostrate rosemary is hanging over their raised edges and doing very well. Another



Rosemary



Harebell

plant introduced by us this year is the wild harebell. This relatively small plant with its delicate blue flower appears to be very happy with us, particularly when planted close to limestone,(which we are not short of!) where it increases quickly and flowers continuously for several months. It is very easy to grow from cuttings so next year we shall try cultivating them in a meadow.

Over the years, with careful management, the numbers of cowslips and bluebells have steadily increased prompting visitors to exclaim "Where else could you see these displays of wild flowers so near the centre of a town". We are proud to say that, with rare exception, our bluebells are all native English ones. Any Spanish ones are swiftly dealt with!



Cowslips



Bluebell

At the end of July Kent High Weald Partnership kindly came to give us a hand both with shifting the soil dug out for the foundation of the shed and help in delineating footpaths where the original line was becoming obscure. We were most impressed by their organised teamwork, but especially by their facilities for making hot drinks and for washing up!



Common Spotted Orchid



Pyramidal Orchid

We are happy to report that the two species of orchid, which were seen for the first time last year, have bloomed once again and slightly increased in number, although not sufficiently for us to advertise their whereabouts. However, if you are around in June and would like to see them, one of the volunteers will be happy to point them out to you.

Where possible we try to reuse and recycle and this year the large bamboo plant bordering the Amphitheatre was cut back and the canes were then stored in the shed to dry, ready to make low barriers to guard and protect the vulnerable spring bulb-planting areas. Also at this time of the year we need to rake the fallen leaves which is a huge task, requiring the help of all the volunteers. The collected leaves are stored out of sight beneath a handy rhododendron until a year later when the leaf mould is used for mulching where needed. Some of the freshly raked leaves when scattered over areas of newly planted bulbs have provided a useful deterrent to squirrels looking to dig them up.

We have continued the seasonal planting of bulbs and hope you will enjoy the 250 crocus,(Ruby Giant) planted near the Jubilee seat and a further 250 wild daffodils near the Molyneux fountain.

Last, but by no means least, we must mention the planting of two new trees in late autumn. The first, *Davidia Involucrata*, commonly known as a Dove tree or Handkerchief tree, supplied and planted for us by TWBC, is, at the time of writing, no more than a very ordinary sapling. However, all that will change on February 6th 2022 when it will have a blessing bestowed upon it and a plaque unveiled at its base, for this tree will mark Her Majesty the Queen's accession to the throne 70 ago. The second tree is a Mountain ash or Rowan planted in the Wet Meadow towards the boundary wall. Here in a, year or two, its autumn colour should be seen to advantage against the backdrop of the dark green foliage beyond.

Talking of trees here is a photograph, taken in the autumn, of our beautiful Atlas cedar which was planted in 1849 when Woodbury Park Cemetary was opened. You can see the foliage is smothered in male catkins, waiting for a breeze to help them release their pollen and when that happens it is quite a sight, for it looks like clouds of smoke blowing along. A week or so later all the ground and all the tombs beneath the tree lie under a thick carpet of dead catkins - all waiting to be swept up!



The Atlas Cedar

If, whilst walking in the Cemetery, you happen to spot some interesting wildlife please let us know, or, better still, send a photograph so that we can add it to our records. Here we have two pictures sent in, first the newly emerged striped caterpillars of the cinnabar moth feeding on ragwort and second, a sizeable outcrop of funghi at the foot of a headstone. Unfortunately we do not know the name of this species, but if anyone could tell us we should be grateful to learn it.



Caterpillars



Funghi

Finally comes our usual plea for more volunteers. If you could join us, even occasionally, please don't hesitate to contact us, either Angela Swain on 01892 541881 or Kirsten Bolt on 079131. 04214

The plan overleaf shows the layout of the cemetery and the location of various areas mentioned in the above text.

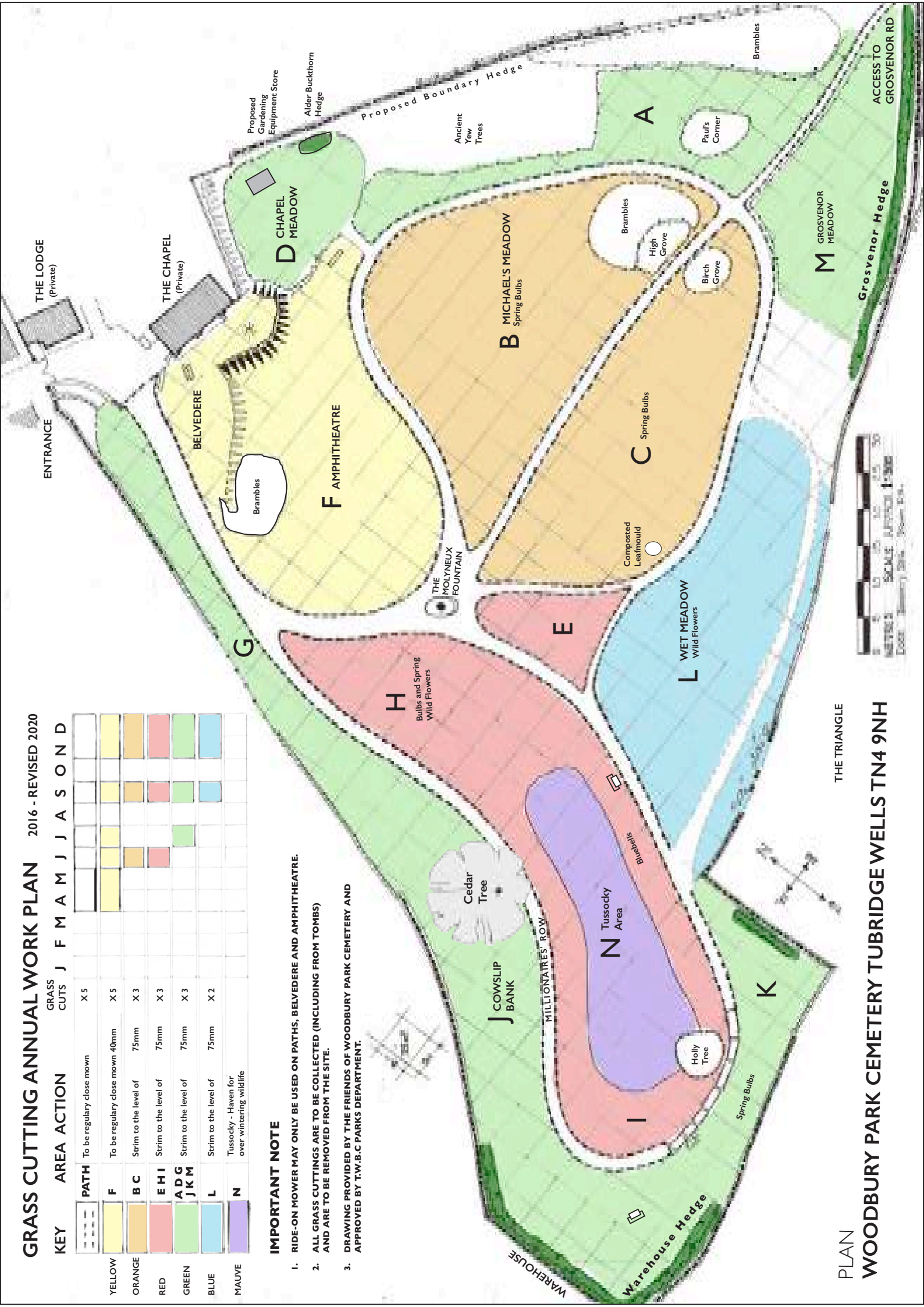
GRASS CUTTING ANNUAL WORK PLAN 2016 - REVISED 2020

GRASS CUTS J F M A M J J A S O N D

KEY	AREA ACTION	GRASS CUTS	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
---	PATH To be regularly close mown	X 5												
YELLOW	F To be regularly close mown 40mm	X 5												
ORANGE	B C Strim to the level of 75mm	X 3												
RED	E H I Strim to the level of 75mm	X 3												
GREEN	A D G Strim to the level of 75mm	X 3												
BLUE	L Strim to the level of 75mm	X 2												
MAUVE	N Tussocky - Haven for over wintering wildlife													

IMPORTANT NOTE

1. RIDE-ON MOWER MAY ONLY BE USED ON PATHS, BELVEDERE AND AMPHITHEATRE.
2. ALL GRASS CUTTINGS ARE TO BE COLLECTED (INCLUDING FROM TOMBS) AND ARE TO BE REMOVED FROM THE SITE.
3. DRAWING PROVIDED BY THE FRIENDS OF WOODBURY PARK CEMETERY AND APPROVED BY T.W.B.C PARKS DEPARTMENT.



PLAN THE TRIANGLE

WOODBURY PARK CEMETERY TUBRIDGE WELLS TN4 9NH