

**Bisley Road Cemetery, Stroud**  
**Site Management Plan**  
**2003-2008**  
**Draft**

Contents Amendment Record

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| 3     | Final Report |         |

## Approval

**Site Name:** Bisley Road Cemetery, Stroud  
**Active Period:** April 2003 to March 2008  
**Author:** Jeremy Doe (Gloucestershire Wildlife Management Ltd.)  
**Consultees:** Stroud Town Council  
Stroud District Council??

### Approved by:

Stroud Town Council (Managers):

| .....<br>Name | .....<br>Position | .....<br>Signature | .....<br>Date |
|---------------|-------------------|--------------------|---------------|
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Stroud District Council (Owners):

| .....<br>Name | .....<br>Position | .....<br>Signature | .....<br>Date |
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# CONTENTS

## Acknowledgements

|            |  |
|------------|--|
| Map 1      | Site Location                          |
| 1          | <b>SITE DESCRIPTION</b>                |
| 1.1        | General Information                    |
| 1.1.1      | Location                               |
| 1.1.2      | Summary Description                    |
| 1.1.3      | Tenure                                 |
| 1.1.4      | Map Coverage                           |
| 1.1.5      | Photographic Coverage                  |
| Map 2      | Site Boundaries, Access & Compartments |
| 1.2        | Environmental Information              |
| 1.2.1      | Physical                               |
| 1.2.2      | Biological                             |
| 1.2.2.1    | Flora                                  |
| 1.2.2.2    | Fauna                                  |
| 1.2.2.3    | Communities                            |
| 1.3        | Bibliography                           |
| 2          | <b>EVALUATION AND OBJECTIVES</b>       |
| 2.1        | Conservation Status                    |
| 2.2        | Evaluation of Features                 |
| 2.2.1      | Criteria for Evaluation                |
| 2.2.2      | Summary of Important Features          |
| 2.2.3      | Ideal Management Objectives            |
| 2.3        | Rationale                              |
| 3          | <b>PRESCRIPTIONS</b>                   |
| 3.1        | Work Programme                         |
| Appendix 1 | Species List                           |
| Appendix 2 | Key Wildlife Site Notification         |

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Gloucestershire Wildlife Management Ltd produced this report. The views expressed are those of GWM and do not necessarily reflect those of the Gloucestershire Wildlife Trust.

Draft May 2003

**map 1**

## **1 SITE DESCRIPTION**

### **1.1 General Information**

#### **1.1.1 Location**

**Site Name:** Bisley Road Cemetery, Stroud

**Site Status:** Local Nature Reserve (LNR)

Partly within and adjoining the Cotswolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB)

Part Key Wildlife Site (KWS)\* SO80/058

Chapel of Rest is a Grade II Listed building

TPOs ?

Register of Historic Parks & Gardens?

**County:** Gloucestershire

**District:** Stroud

**Local Planning Authority:** Stroud District Council

**Grid Reference:** SO864038

**Area:** Northern section - 4.1ha. Southern section - 2.2ha.

**Access:** (see Map 2) The site is open at all times. There is vehicular access into both sections with parking spaces and there are numerous pedestrian access points into both sections. The road to The Horns dividing the two sections is a public footpath.

*\*A site recognised by the Gloucestershire Wildlife Trust (GWT) as being of at least county importance for wildlife.*

#### **1.1.2 Summary Description**

The site comprises two adjoining areas on steep to moderately sloping south and south-west facing ground on the eastern edge of Stroud. The original Victorian cemetery occupies the top area, with the main access off Bisley Road. This area comprises the Chapel of Rest, old gravestones, unimproved grassland, scrub and plantation woodland and specimen trees, all divided by a network of paths. Substantial stone walls border much of the area. The recent southern section, main access off the Heavens Road, is more formally laid out on a gentler slope. The site contains unimproved and semi-improved grassland, scrub/woodland, specimen trees and boundary hedgerows. This area is still being used for burials. The whole site supports a rich variety of plants and animals, including nationally and locally rare species, has considerable historical interest and provides a fine view across the Frome Valley and down the Severn Estuary.

#### **1.1.3 Land Tenure**

Owned by Stroud District Council

Managed by Stroud Town Council

#### **1.1.4 Map Coverage**

O.S. 1:50000 Sheet 162 (Landranger Series 1990)

O.S. 1:25000 Sheet 168 (Explorer Series 1998)

Geological Survey of Great Britain Sheet 234

Maps held at Church House, Standish

#### **1.1.5 Photographic Coverage**

Colour prints taken in August 1991 are held at GWM offices, Church House, Standish

**map 2**

## 1.2 Environmental Information

### 1.2.1 Physical

**Climate:** Average annual rainfall 850-900mm.

**Geology:** Lower Inferior oolite, with possibly a small area of Cotteswold Sands.

**Soils:** Possibly Calcareous pelosols and Brown earths (Soils of South West England - Soil Survey of England and Wales).

**Altitude:** 95 - 145m above sea level.

**Topography and Aspect:** Steep, moderate and gently sloping banks with a mainly southerly aspect. Parts of the site are south-west facing.

**Water Regime:** No standing or running water. The bottom south-east corner of the southern section is damper than the rest of the site.

### 1.2.2 Biological

Species marked\* are **Priority Species** (formerly short & middle list of Globally Threatened/Declining Species) and those marked \*\* are **Species of Conservation Concern** (formerly long list of Globally Threatened/Declining Species) (*Biodiversity: The UK Steering Group Report*). Nationally Scarce/Notable: species recorded in less than 100 10km squares of the OS national grid since 1970.

Full accounts of the flora and fauna are given in *Volume 1 Biodiversity Report (1998)*. Brief summaries are given here.

#### 1.2.2.1 Flora

**Lichens:** The site supports one of the richest recorded lowland graveyard floras, with 101 species recorded. These include 16 considered uncommon in this sort of habitat and three, *Bacidia bagliettoana*, *Peltigera rufescens* and *Sarcogyne privigna*, rarely found in lowland churchyards. Only two cemeteries (Carlisle and Abbey Cemetery, Bath), about 60 lowland churchyards and two cathedral precincts have a higher recorded diversity. Three species are Nationally Scarce; *Porpidia soledizoides*, *Psilolechia leprosa* and *S. privigna*.

**Fungi:** Twenty-four common species recorded.

**Bryophytes:** Ten common species recorded.

**Vascular Plants:** The site supports an excellent range of limestone grassland, scrub, woodland and ruderal plants and a good variety of native and introduced trees and shrubs. In all over 270 species have been recorded. No Nationally Scarce (JNCC 1994) plants are recorded, but species of local interest include fragrant orchid (*Gymnadenia conopsea*), pyramidal orchid (*Anacamptis pyramidalis*), white helleborine (*Cephalanthera damasonium*), broad-leaved helleborine (*Epipactis helleborine*), kidney vetch (*Anthyllis vulneraria*) and wood meadow-grass (*Poa nemoralis*). Bluebells\*\* (*Hyacinthoides non-scripta*) are present (UK is thought to support 25-49% of the world population).

The GWT's *Oolitic Limestone Grassland Evaluation Sheet* lists 'Local Species characteristic of quality unimproved grassland'. Nine of these species are present: pyramidal orchid, fragrant orchid, kidney vetch, yellow-wort (*Blackstonia perfoliata*), long-stalked crane's-bill (*Geranium columbinum*), hawkweed (*Hieracium agg.*), ploughman's-spikenard (*Inula conyzae*), musk mallow (*Malva moschata*) and dark mullein (*Verbascum nigrum*).

### 1.2.2.2 Fauna

#### Invertebrates

**Mollusca:** *Abida secale* (large chrysalis snail) is Nationally Notable and a KWS species. Other KWS species recorded are *Pupilla muscorum* (moss chrysalis snail) and *Helicella itala* (heath snail).

**Diplopoda (millipedes):** *Brachychaeteuma melanops* is Nationally Notable. Also recorded is *Nanogona polydesmoides*\*\* (the UK is thought to support 50-74% of the world population).

**Chilopoda (centipedes):** *Cryptops parisi* recorded in 2001, only its 10th county record.

**Orthoptera (grasshoppers & bush-crickets):** The Nationally Notable rufous grasshopper\*\* (*Gomphocerippus rufus*) was recorded in 1997. This species is thought to have suffered a significant decline in Great Britain in the last 25 years.

**Hemiptera (bugs):** *Catoplatus fabricii* (a lacebug) is Nationally Notable. *Cardiastethus fasciiventris* and *Berytinus minor* (a stiltbug) are county rarities.

**Coleoptera (beetles):** Ten Nationally Notable species are recorded; *Aphanistiscus pusillus* (a jewel beetle), *Phytoecia cylindrica* (a longhorn beetle), *Cryptocephalus aureolus* (a leaf beetle), flax flea beetle (*Longitarsus parvulus*), *Cassida prasina* (a leaf beetle), cramp-ball fungus weevil (*Platyrrhinus resinosus*) and the weevils *Trachyphloeus alternans*, *Larinus planus*, *Miarus graminis* and *Gymnetron melanarium*. *Silpha tristis* (a sexton beetle), *Onthophagus joannae* (a dung beetle) and *Tychius junceus* (a weevil) are county rarities. Also of note is glow-worm (*Lampyrus noctiluca*), a nationally declining KWS species, and a good assemblage of ladybirds.

**Lepidoptera (butterflies & moths):** Small blue\*\* (*Cupido minimus*) and brown argus (*Aricia agestis*) are KWS butterflies. Also of note are the increasingly scarce dingy skipper (*Erynnis tages*) and two moths rare in the county, *Micropterix aruncella* and *Dichrorampha acuminatana*.

**Diptera (flies):** Three Nationally Notable species recorded; *Chorisops nagatomii* (a soldier fly) and the hoverflies *Rhingia rostrata* and *Pipizella virens*. The hoverfly *Xanthogramma citrofasciatum* is a county rarity.

**Hymenoptera (bees, ants & wasps):** *Formica cunicularia* is a KWS species ant. Also of note is the locally uncommon grey mining bee (*Andrena cineraria*).

**Isopoda (woodlice):** A good assemblage of 12 species recorded.

**Arachnida (spiders):** A very good assemblage of 40 species recorded.

#### Vertebrates

**Reptilia:** Slow-worm\*\* (*Anguis fragilis*), adder\*\* (*Vipera berus*) and viviparous (common) lizard (*Lacerta vivipara*) are recorded. Adder and viviparous lizard are KWS species.

**Aves:** A typical variety of scrub and grassland birds are recorded. These include the following **Red List** (high conservation concern) and Amber List (medium conservation concern) species; **spotted flycatcher\*** (*Muscicapa striata*), **song thrush\*** (*Turdus philomelos*), **starling** (*Sturnus vulgaris*), **house sparrow** (*Passer domesticus*), green woodpecker\*\* (*Picus viridis*), dunnock\*\* (*Prunella modularis*), mistle thrush (*Turdus viscivorus*) and goldcrest\*\* (*Regulus regulus*). Spotted flycatcher and song thrush have suffered a 50-100% decline in the UK in the past 25 years. Dunnock have suffered a 25-49% decline in the UK in the past 25 years.

Red and Amber List species from *The population status of birds in the UK, Channel Islands and Isle of Man: an analysis of conservation concern 2002-2007*. British Birds 95

**Mammals:** The site is a feeding ground for badgers\*\* (*Meles meles*) and noctule\*\* (*Nyctalus noctula*) and pipistrelle\* (*Pipistrellus pipistrellus*) bats. Evidence of brown long-eared bat\*\* (*Plecotus auritus*) was also seen in 1997, in the Chapel of Rest.

### Species Information Summary Table

| Group           | No spp | Important Species  | Quality of Survey data             |
|-----------------|--------|--|------------------------------------|
| Lichens         | 101    | Nationally Scarce (3)  | Full survey 1997                   |
| Bryophytes      | 10     |  | Survey 1997                        |
| Fungi           | 24     |  | Survey 1997                        |
| Vascular Plants | 270    | BAP3 (1)   | Full survey 1997 & records 1990/91 |
| Mollusca        | 10     | Nationally Notable (1)<br>KWS (3)                              | Surveys 1997 & 2001                |
| Diplopoda       | 7      | Nationally Notable (1)<br>BAP3 (1)                             | Surveys 1997 & 2001                |
| Chilopoda       | 7      | County rarity (1)  | Surveys 1997 & 2001                |
| Odonata         | 1      |  | Casual record 1997                 |
| Orthoptera      | 4      | Nationally Notable (1)<br>BAP3 (1)                             | Surveys 1997 & 2001                |
| Psocoptera      | 2      |  | Surveys 1997 & 2001                |
| Hemiptera       | 25     | Nationally Notable (1)<br>County rarity (2)                    | Surveys 1997 & 2001                |
| Neuroptera      | 1      |  | Survey 2001                        |
| Coleoptera      | 72     | Nationally Notable (10)<br>County rarity (3)<br>KWS (1)        | Surveys 1997 & 2001                |
| Trichoptera     | 1      |  | Survey 2001                        |
| Lepidoptera     | 42     | BAP3 (1)<br>KWS (2)<br>County rarity (2)                       | Surveys 1997 & 2001                |
| Diptera         | 20     | Nationally Notable (3)<br>County rarity (1)                    | Surveys 1997 & 2001                |
| Hymenoptera     | 7      | KWS (1)  | Surveys 1997 & 2001                |
| Isopoda         | 12     |  | Surveys 1997 & 2001                |
| Opiliones       | 2      |  | Surveys 1997 & 2001                |
| Arachnida       | 40     |  | Surveys 1997 & 2001                |
| Reptilia        | 3      | BAP3 (2)<br>KWS (2)  | Records 1997 & 2001                |
| Aves            | 25     | Red List (4)<br>Amber List (4)<br>BAP Priority (2)<br>BAP3 (8) | Survey 1997                        |
| Mammalia        | 6      | BAP Priority (1)<br>BAP3 (3)                                   | Survey 1997                        |

### 1.2.2.3 Communities

The following National Vegetation Classification (NVC) communities are present (Rodwell (ed) *British Plant Communities Volume 1 Woodlands and scrub* 1991 & *Volume 3 Grasslands and montane communities* 1992):

CG3 - *Bromus erectus* grassland

CG5a - *Bromus erectus* - *Brachypodium pinnatum* grassland; Typical sub-community

MG1 - *Arrhenatherum elatius* grassland

W8 - *Fraxinus excelsior* - *Acer campestre* - *Mercurialis perennis* woodland

There are also patches of wood/shrubs and enriched grassland that are not assignable to a NVC type. Brief descriptions of each compartment (as assessed in 1997) are given below.

**Cpt A** - Steep to moderately sloping bank. An excellent flora includes kidney vetch, foodplant of the small blue butterfly, not present elsewhere on the site. Also typical of quality limestone grassland are harebell (*Campanula rotundifolia*), fragrant orchid, yellow-wort, fairy flax (*Linum catharticum*), common rock-rose (*Helianthemum nummularium*), downy oat-grass (*Helictotrichon pubescens*), quaking-grass (*Briza media*), dwarf thistle (*Cirsium acaule*), common bird's-foot-trefoil (*Lotus corniculatus*), marjoram (*Origanum vulgare*), field scabious (*Knautia arvensis*), burnet-saxifrage (*Pimpinella saxifraga*) and salad burnet (*Sanguisorba minor*). Other species include broad-leaved helleborine and hawkweed. The grasses upright brome (*Bromopsis erecta*) and tor-grass (*Brachypodium pinnatum*) determine the NVC. Mature silver birch (*Betula pendula*), Monterey cypress (*Cupressus macrocarpa*) and sycamore (*Acer pseudoplatanus*) are present. **NVC CG5a**

**Cpt B** - A mix of regularly mown, less intensively managed herb-rich and rank swards, the latter dominated by false oat-grass (*Arrhenatherum elatius*). The richest area contains pyramidal orchid, harebell, lady's bedstraw (*Galium verum*), dwarf thistle, field scabious, sweet vernal-grass (*Anthoxanthum odoratum*), sheep's-fescue (*Festuca ovina*), yellow oat-grass (*Trisetum flavescens*), glaucous sedge (*Carex flacca*), oxeye daisy (*Leucanthemum vulgare*), common rock-rose, meadow vetchling (*Lathyrus pratensis*), cowslip (*Primula veris*) and rough hawkbit (*Leontodon hispidus*). At the edges are ash (*Fraxinus excelsior*), field maple (*Acer campestre*), nootka cypress (*Chamaecyparis nootkatensis*), strawberry-tree (*Arbutus unedo*), cut-leaved lime (*Tilia platyphyllos* 'laciniata'), holly (*Ilex aquifolium*), hawthorn (*Crataegus monogyna*), lime (*Tilia x vulgaris*), evergreen oak (*Quercus ilex*) and copper beech (*Fagus sylvatica* 'purpurea'). Below the trees are broad-leaved helleborine, wood meadow-grass and stinking iris (*Iris foetidissima*). **NVC CG3 and MG1**

**Cpt C** - A rank sward amongst gravestones, with a moderate variety of grassland, scrub and tall herb species. Calcareous species include burnet-saxifrage, salad burnet, field scabious, quaking-grass, marjoram, common knapweed (*Centaurea nigra*), harebell and pyramidal orchid. There are patches of tall herb, mainly common nettle (*Urtica dioica*), rosebay willowherb (*Chamerion angustifolium*), wild carrot (*Daucus carota*) and hogweed (*Heracleum sphondylium*). Also present are locally dense growths of bramble (*Rubus fruticosus*), traveller's-joy (*Clematis vitalba*), field bindweed (*Convolvulus arvensis*), ivy (*Hedera helix*), tufted vetch (*Vicia cracca*), red clover (*Trifolium pratense*) and black medick (*Medicago lupulina*). There are also many native and introduced shrubs and scattered trees, including Lawson cypress (*Chamaecyparis lawsoniana*), hawthorn, holly, rowan (*Sorbus aucuparia*) and cut-leaved lime. A good area for common lizard and rufous grasshopper. **NVC CG5 and MG1**

**Cpt D** - Gently-sloping bank of mainly rank false oat-grass and upright brome grassland with a moderate range of herbs. Wild carrot, hedge bedstraw (*Galium mollugo*), hogweed, cat's-ear (*Hypochaeris radicata*), field scabious, rough hawkbit, oxeye daisy, burnet-saxifrage and sorrel (*Rumex acetosa*) are scattered throughout. Frequent are red clover, ribwort plantain (*Plantago lanceolata*), dandelion (*Taraxacum* agg.), rough meadow-grass (*Poa trivialis*) and yellow oat-grass, with pyramidal orchid, greater knapweed (*Centaurea scabiosa*) and bulbous buttercup (*Ranunculus bulbosus*) rare. There are two small, regularly mown areas and mature Norway spruce (*Picea abies*),

copper beech, sycamore, yew (*Taxus baccata*), holly, laburnum (*Laburnum anagyroides*), ash, rowan, Portugal laurel (*Prunus lusitanica*) and evergreen oak. A dense shrub area in the south-west corner comprises lilac (*Syringa vulgaris*), yew, holly, cherry laurel (*Prunus laurocerasus*) and semi-mature sycamore and Norway maple (*Acer platanoides*). **NVC CG3 and MG1**

**Cpt E** - A fine area with a diversity of habitats and species. The main central section supports a herb-rich sward with frequent upright brome, yellow oat-grass, greater knapweed, hedge bedstraw, field scabious, marjoram and salad burnet. Common restharrow (*Ononis repens*) is locally abundant and there is some yellow-rattle (*Rhinanthus minor*), oxeye daisy, common rock-rose, common knapweed, quaking-grass, smooth meadow-grass (*Poa pratensis*) and smooth hawk's-beard (*Crepis capillaris*). Tall grass and flowers at the west end include common toadflax (*Linaria vulgaris*), red campion (*Silene dioica*) and long-stalked crane's-bill. The eastern end grades into open scrub and sapling trees, including pedunculate oak (*Quercus robur*), silver birch, sycamore and lime. The open scrub develops into dense woodland. Pyramidal orchid and broad-leaved helleborine occur at the scrub edges. Scattered trees in the open grassland include laburnum, Chinese Thuja (*Thuja orientalis*), nootka cypress, Turkey oak (*Quercus cerris*), Lawson cypress and holly varieties. **NVC CG5 and MG1**

**Cpt F** - A herb-rich bank with marjoram, field scabious, salad burnet, common restharrow, mouse-ear hawkweed (*Pilosella officinarum*), tufted vetch, upright brome, quaking-grass, red fescue (*Festuca rubra*), yellow-wort, harebell, greater knapweed, wild basil (*Clinopodium vulgare*), common rock-rose, fairy flax, burnet-saxifrage and dwarf thistle. Scattered trees include Corsican pine (*Pinus nigra* ssp. *laricio*), lime, strawberry-tree, Scots pine (*Pinus sylvestris*), rowan, whitebeam (*Sorbus aria*), Irish yew (*Taxus baccata* 'fastigiata'), cherry plum (*Prunus cerasifera* 'nigra'), box (*Buxus sempervirens*), horse-chestnut (*Aesculus hippocastanum*) and large-leaved lime (*Tilia platyphyllos*). Under mature trees at the eastern end are evergreen oak, hazel (*Corylus avellana*), walnut (*Juglans regia*), hawthorn and beech (*Fagus sylvatica*). The dense copse at the west end contains cherry laurel, lilac, laburnum, box, holly, Norway maple and lime. The ground flora is poor beneath the heavy shade but broad-leaved helleborines occur at the edge of this block. **NVC CG3 and CG5**

**Cpt G** - Large grassland bank with patches of trees and shrubs and scattered conifers. A good variety of limestone grassland plants includes frequent upright brome, quaking-grass, tor-grass, yellow oat-grass, common rock-rose, marjoram and salad burnet with some fairy flax, burnet-saxifrage, field scabious, dwarf thistle, greater knapweed, glaucous sedge, harebell and pyramidal orchid. Trees and shrubs include yews, Monterey cypress, pedunculate oak, goat willow (*Salix caprea*), dogwood (*Cornus sanguinea*), lime, Corsican pine, nootka cypress, wych elm (*Ulmus glabra*), laburnum, privet (*Ligustrum* sp.), cotoneaster, cut-leaved hazel (*Corylus avellana heterophylla*), holly and copper beech. There is little ground flora beneath the shrub patches except for carpets of ivy and some nipplewort (*Lapsana communis*), red campion and stinking iris. **NVC CG5a**

**Cpt H** - Rank grassland with scattered trees and shrubs amongst gravestones, with many ruderal and garden plants. A rank sward comprises false oat-grass, upright brome, hedge bedstraw, field scabious, oxeye daisy, cock's-foot (*Dactylis glomerata*), yellow oat-grass, wild carrot, burnet-saxifrage and dark mullein. Salad burnet, burnet-saxifrage and field scabious are frequent in the mown path edges. Ruderal and garden plants include groundsel (*Senecio vulgaris*), common poppy (*Papaver rhoeas*), wall barley (*Hordeum murinum*), hedge mustard (*Sisymbrium officinale*), red valerian (*Centranthus ruber*) and evening-primrose (*Oenothera* sp.). There is one major clump of cherry laurel, wych elm, sycamore, privet, lilac, butterfly-bush (*Buddleja davidii*) and bramble with smaller clumps and trees throughout, including holly, yews and apple (*Malus* sp.). **NVC MG1, CG3 and CG5**

**Cpt I** - The most formal part of the top cemetery, comprising a short regularly mown sward amongst gravestones, scattered ornamental trees and shrubs and a well-pruned hedge. Although cut short there is a good range of plants, including upright brome, yarrow (*Achillea millefolium*), dwarf thistle, hedge bedstraw, mouse-ear hawkweed, field scabious, rough hawkbit, oxeye daisy, field forget-me-not (*Myosotis arvensis*) and burnet-saxifrage. Perennial rye-grass (*Lolium perenne*) and white clover indicate that the grassland has been partly improved. Less frequent are timothy (*Phleum pratense*),

glaucous sedge, field wood-rush (*Luzula campestris*), hoary plantain (*Plantago media*) and common mouse-ear (*Cerastium fontanum*). Ivy and long-stalked crane's-bill are locally frequent. Ornamental trees and shrubs include mature Lawson cypress, evergreen oak, box and Irish yew. **NVC CG5**

**Cpt J** - Mixed planted woodland and scrub. The tree layer includes sycamore, ash, Norway maple, lime, beech, silver birch, Corsican pine, Turkey oak, western red-cedar (*Thuja plicata*) and whitebeam over rowan, field maple, yew, hazel, hawthorn, holly, traveller's-joy, honeysuckle (*Lonicera periclymenum*), dogwood, elder (*Sambucus nigra*), dog-rose (*Rosa canina*), dewberry (*Rubus caesius*), wych elm, pedunculate oak and horse-chestnut. The ground flora is dominated by ivy and dog's mercury, with herb-robert (*Geranium robertianum*), false brome (*Brachypodium sylvaticum*), lords-and-ladies (*Arum maculatum*), bluebell, wood avens (*Geum urbanum*), broad-leaved willowherb (*Epilobium montanum*), broad-leaved helleborine, primrose (*Primula vulgaris*), grey sedge (*Carex divulsa*) and sweet violet (*Viola odorata*). An open canopy area has frequent common nettle, ground-elder (*Aegopodium podagraria*) and great willowherb (*Epilobium hirsutum*).

**Cpt K** - A small moderately sloping area, partly shaded by a row of limes on the southern edge with an interesting mix of woodland and grassland species. Meadow vetchling, field scabious, oxeye daisy, burnet-saxifrage, tufted vetch, upright brome, hedge bedstraw and bush vetch (*Vicia sepium*) are all frequent, with some sweet vernal-grass, yarrow, common bird's-foot-trefoil, rough hawkbit, bluebell, primrose and glaucous sedge. There are small clumps of trees and shrubs at the edge of which are grey sedge, white helleborine, broad-leaved helleborine and sweet violet. The ground flora beneath the dense tree/shrub canopy is dominated by ivy. Trees and shrubs include Lawson cypress, yews, ash, oaks, silver birch, laburnum, Norway maple, cherry laurel and sycamore. **NVC MG1 and CG5**

**Cpt L** - Rank false oat-grass and upright brome grassland, heavily shaded by a row of limes, with a moderate range of grassland and tall herb species, evergreen shrubs and bramble. Frequent are bush vetch, black medick, field bindweed, creeping bent (*Agrostis stolonifera*), cock's-foot and red fescue, with some hedge bedstraw, hogweed, cat's-ear, field scabious, rough hawkbit, meadow vetchling, oxeye daisy and burnet-saxifrage. Trees and shrubs include cherry laurel, sycamore, dewberry, ash, holly, hornbeam (*Carpinus betulinus*), Lawson cypress, laburnum and yews. **NVC CG3 and MG1**

**Cpt M** - Mainly species-poor woodland and scrub dominated by lime, sycamore, cherry laurel, yew and hollies and ivy as ground cover. There are a few pedunculate oak saplings and some field maple, silver birch, hawthorn, ash, Scots pine, blackthorn (*Prunus spinosa*), elder, rowan, whitebeam, dogwood, wych elm and privet. Other woodland species include false brome, spurge-laurel (*Daphne laureola*), broad-leaved helleborine, giant fescue (*Festuca gigantea*), wood meadow-grass and sweet violet. A small grassland area north of the chapel contains upright brome, common knapweed, greater knapweed, burnet-saxifrage, hedge bedstraw, wild basil and yellow-rattle. Scattered trees include laburnum, Corsican Pine, Monterey cypress and evergreen oak.

**Cpt N** - The wall and hedge forming the southern boundary of the top cemetery. The dense regularly cut hedge comprises sycamore, field maple, hawthorn, ash, holly, wild privet, dog-rose, bramble, lime, cherry laurel, wych elm, whitebeam, Norway maple and hazel. There are few ground flora species. Ivy is dominant over much of the wall.

**Cpt O** - Regularly mowed grassland still supporting a good variety of tolerant species. Perennial ryegrass is frequent with red fescue, upright brome, oxeye daisy, hoary plantain, rough hawkbit, common bird's-foot-trefoil, burnet-saxifrage, mouse-ear hawkweed and field scabious. Marjoram, salad burnet, sorrel, dwarf thistle and meadow buttercup (*Ranunculus acris*) occur rarely. Also present are ruderal species such as common poppy and wild teasel (*Dipsacus fullonum*). The many ornamental plantings include Lawson cypress cultivars, nootka cypress and avenues of winter-flowering cherry (*Prunus subhirtella 'Autumnalis'*), wild cherry (*P. avium*) and Manchurian cherry (*P. maackii*). **NVC CG3**

**Cpt P** - A gappy hedge comprising sycamore, cherry laurel, ash, yew, hazel, hawthorn, field maple, privet, holly, box, mock-orange (*Philadelphus sp.*), blackthorn, elder, dog-rose and bramble. The

ground flora includes garlic mustard (*Alliaria petiolata*), cow parsley, lords-and-ladies, false brome, white bryony (*Bryonia dioica*), wood avens, stinking iris and abundant ivy. Specimen trees around the south-west corner include Lawson cypress (blue and golden cultivars), laburnum, hollies, silver birch, cherry plum, golden Irish yew (*T. baccata 'fastigiata aureomarginata'*), Scots pine and Corsican pine.

**Cpt Q** - A thick hedge with extensive patches of bramble and dewberry and frequent field maple, sycamore, hawthorn, cherry laurel, privet, wych elm, dogwood and holly. The ground flora includes stinking iris and nipplewort. A short open grassland section contains field scabious, marjoram, wild basil, upright brome, burnet-saxifrage and greater knapweed. Specimen trees include red horse-chestnut (*Aesculus x carnea*), ashleaf maple (*Acer negundo*), hybrid holly (*Ilex x altaclarensis*), Corsican pine, cockspurthorn (*Crataegus crus-galli*) and cappadocian maple (*Acer cappadocicum*).

**Cpt R** - A steeply sloping bank of rank, herb-rich grassland. False oat-grass, meadow fescue (*Festuca pratensis*), upright brome, marjoram, greater knapweed, meadow vetchling and common bird's-foot-trefoil are frequent, with occasional wild basil, perforate St-John's-wort, field scabious, oxeye daisy and burnet-saxifrage. Tall herbs such as wild teasel, Canadian goldenrod (*Solidago canadensis*) and perennial sow-thistle (*Sonchus arvensis*) occur. There are scattered-planted trees. This bank is good for marbled white and common blue (*Polyommatus icarus*) butterflies. **NVC CG3 and MG1**

**Cpt S** - A regularly mown sward still containing species typical of semi-natural grassland. Perennial rye-grass, red fescue, yarrow, daisy (*Bellis perennis*), smooth hawk's-beard, cat's-ear, rough hawkbit, black medick, ribwort plantain, dandelion and red and white clovers are the main species. More interesting herbs, such as common bird's-foot-trefoil, marjoram, greater knapweed, field scabious and oxeye daisy occur at low cover. There are scattered-planted flowering cherries around the edges.

**Area T** - An area of scrub/woodland comprising mostly ash and sycamore over an understorey of hazel, hawthorn, blackthorn, elder and wych elm and ivy dominated ground flora. Other ground flora species include herb-robert, wood avens, cow parsley, false brome, hedge woundwort (*Stachys sylvatica*) and hairy-brome (*Bromopsis ramosa*). The edges grade into rough grass. **NVC W8**

**Cpt U** - Used as a dumping area with extensive disturbed ground supporting a mainly ruderal community. Species particularly frequent include false oat-grass, perennial rye-grass, annual meadow-grass (*Poa annua*), creeping thistle (*Cirsium arvense*), greater plantain (*Plantago major*), common nettle, dandelion, mugwort, knotgrass (*Polygonum aviculare*), pineappleweed (*Matricaria discoidea*), scentless mayweed (*Tripleurospermum inodorum*) and spear-leaved orache (*Atriplex prostrata*).

### 1.3 Bibliography

Bisley Road Cemetery, Stroud: Volume 1 - Biodiversity Study (GWM 1998)  
Bisley Road Cemetery, Stroud: Site Management Plan 1998-2003 (GWM 1998)  
Biodiversity: The UK Steering Group Report (HMSO 1995)

## 2 EVALUATION AND OBJECTIVES

### 2.1 Conservation Status

The old (top) cemetery is a Key Wildlife Site SO80/058  
Local Nature Reserve  
Grade II Listed Structures  
Partly within the Cotswolds AONB

### 2.2 Evaluation of Features

#### 2.2.1 Criteria for Evaluation

The site is assessed against standard criteria.

**Size** - The whole site covers over 6ha, an appreciable area of important habitat, particularly within a semi-urban setting. The size means that good and stable populations of many plants and animals are present. It also allows for extensive management operations and, for example, having a variety of grassland management regimes.

**Diversity** - There is a good variety of grassland communities, as well as variation within these from tall, rank swards to very short open sward areas. Also present are areas of natural woodland, hedgerow and scrub and planted non-native trees and shrubs. The buildings, walls and gravestones give an added diversity not usually present in wildlife sites. All these habitats support an excellent range and number of plant and animal species.

**Naturalness** - Large parts of the site support semi-natural grassland, woodland and scrub. Some areas have been interplanted with non-native trees and shrubs but still retain a semi-natural character. Even some of the intensively managed swards are semi-natural, although some areas appear partially improved by reseeded. There has been extensive planting of exotic species and there are 'garden escape' plants introduced either by direct planting or seeded from cut flowers. The overall result is a mosaic of semi-natural and man made areas.

**Rarity** - Unimproved limestone grassland is a nationally rare and declining habitat (it is a National Biodiversity Action Plan **Priority Habitat**). Gloucestershire is the national stronghold for both the habitat and many of the species it supports. The site contains many nationally and locally scarce invertebrates and has been assessed as one of the top three cemeteries in Britain for lichens. It is one of the few cemetery/churchyard and urban edge sites recognised as a KWS by the GWT.

**Fragility** - Limestone grassland is one of the most fragile of habitats. Some of the susceptible problems are exhibited here (although these have largely been addressed during the period of the previous management plan). These include infrequent or lack of cutting leading to rank swards and scrub encroachment resulting in the reduction or loss of species requiring short open swards and erosion on steep, very thin-soiled areas. Consistent and harsh mowing would eventually result in the loss of plants unable to set seed. The shrub and woodland areas are more robust but need some management to encourage some of the less vigorous and light demanding plants.

**Typicalness** - The site supports a range of plants, animals and communities typical of unimproved limestone grassland in Gloucestershire, as well as some of the typical management issues. The older planted trees are thought to be representative of the varieties commonly planted in Victorian churchyards. The newer plantings are of species frequently found in parks, gardens and other amenity areas. Parts of the site (the new cemetery still being used for burials and the main access into the old area) are typically managed in the formal way found in many cemeteries.

**Recorded History** - An extensive survey carried out in 1997 was the first comprehensive recording of

the biological interest. The Gloucestershire Invertebrate Group (GIG) visited the site in 2001. Some surveying of the richest grassland areas in the old cemetery was done in 1990/91 as part of a Nature Conservancy Council and Stroud District Council initiative. Otherwise the site had been little recorded. The Stroud Local History Society researched the historical importance in 1997/98. Construction of the old cemetery began in the 1850s on the site brought from a local brewer. The first burial was in September 1856, the occupant one of the many hundreds of unmarked graves in addition to the all the marked graves. Burial records, currently contained in increasingly fragile ledgers, *are being entered onto a computer database.?? completed??*

**Position in an Ecological Unit** - The site is bordered by housing, a recreation ground, allotments, semi-natural woodland and semi-improved grassland. The nearest KWS are; The Horns Bank (KWS Code SO80/069), unimproved limestone grassland with extensive scrub growth, Abbey Wood & Proud Grove (SO80/013) c0.7km. to the north-east, Claypits Wood (SO80/027) 1km. south, Horns Wood (SO80/029) 0.5km. east, all ancient woodlands, and the unimproved limestone grassland of Rodborough Common SSSI (SO80/017) 1km. to the south-west. The lane, woodland, grassland, hedgerow and scrub to the east form a continuous wildlife corridor to the woods and other semi-natural areas of Horns valley and Cotswold scarp.

**Potential Value** - There is potential for enhancing the biological interest, both by sympathetic management of existing habitats and by creating new ones, particularly hedgerow. The site has potential for educational use and research, particularly on local history and various plant and animal groups and species, site interpretation material and to be generally promoted to the Stroud public.

**Intrinsic Appeal** - An attractive, peaceful site well used by the local community for 'quiet recreation', containing a wealth of interesting and important nature conservation and historical features.

## 2.2.2

## Summary of Important Features

| Important Features  | Importance                            | Status  |
|---|---------------------------------------|---|
| <b>Structures:</b><br>Chapel of Rest                        | Grade II                              |   |
| <b>Habitats:</b><br>Lowland mixed broadleaved woodland (W8) | BAP Priority                          |   |
| Lowland calcareous grassland (CG5)                          | BAP Priority<br>KWS                   |   |
| <b>Species:</b>   |                                       |   |
| <b>Lichens</b>  |                                       |   |
| Species assemblage  | National                              | Assessed 1997   |
| <i>Porpidia soredizoides</i>                                | Nationally Scarce                     | Recorded 1997   |
| <i>Psilolechia leprosa</i>                                  | Nationally Scarce                     | Recorded 1997   |
| <i>Sarcogyne privigna</i>                                   | Nationally Scarce                     | Recorded 1997   |
| <b>Vascular Plants</b>                                      |                                       |   |
| Bluebell  | BAP3                                  |   |
| <b>Molluscs</b>   |                                       |   |
| <i>Abida secale</i>   | Nationally Notable<br>KWS             | Recorded 2001   |
| <i>Pupilla muscorum</i>                                     | KWS                                   | Recorded 2001   |
| <i>Helicella itala</i>                                      | KWS                                   | Recorded 2001   |
| <b>Diplopoda</b>  |                                       |   |
| <i>Brachychateuma melanops</i>                              | Nationally Notable                    | Recorded 2001   |
| <i>Nanogona polydesmoides</i>                               | BAP3                                  | Recorded 2001   |
| <b>Chilopoda</b>  |                                       |   |
| <i>Cryptops parisi</i>                                      | County rarity                         | Recorded 2001   |
| <b>Orthoptera</b>   |                                       |   |
| Rufous grasshopper  | Nationally Notable<br>BAP3            | Recorded 1997. Stroud valleys are a national stronghold |
| <b>Hemiptera</b>  |                                       |   |
| <i>Catoplatys fabricii</i>                                  | Nationally Notable                    | Recorded 1997   |
| <i>Cardiastethus fasciiventris</i>                          | County rarity                         | Recorded 2001   |
| <i>Berytinus minor</i>                                      | County rarity                         | Recorded 1997   |
| <b>Coleoptera</b>   |                                       |   |
| <i>Aphanistiscus pusillus</i>                               | Nationally Notable                    | Recorded 2001   |
| <i>Phytoecia cylindrica</i>                                 | Nationally Notable                    | Recorded 2001   |
| <i>Cryptocephalus aureolus</i>                              | Nationally Notable                    | Recorded 2001   |
| <i>Longitarsus parvulus</i>                                 | Nationally Notable                    | Recorded 2001   |
| <i>Cassida prasina</i>                                      | Nationally Notable                    | Recorded 2001   |
| <i>Platyrhinus resinosus</i>                                | Nationally Notable                    | Recorded 1997   |
| <i>Trachyphloeus alternans</i>                              | Nationally Notable                    | Recorded 1997   |
| <i>Larinus planus</i>                                       | Nationally Notable                    | Recorded 2001   |
| <i>Miarus graminis</i>                                      | Nationally Notable                    | Recorded 1997   |
| <i>Gymnetron melanarium</i>                                 | Nationally Notable                    | Recorded 2001   |
| <i>Silpha tristis</i>                                       | County rarity                         | Recorded 2001   |
| <i>Onthophagus joannae</i>                                  | County rarity                         | Recorded 2001   |
| <i>Tychius junceus</i>                                      | County rarity                         | Recorded 2001   |
| Glow-worm   | KWS                                   | Recorded 2001   |
| <b>Lepidoptera</b>  |                                       |   |
| Small blue  | KWS<br>BAP3                           | Recorded 1997   |
| Brown argus   | KWS                                   | Recorded 1997   |
| Dingy skipper   | Not listed but now meets BAP criteria | Recorded 1997   |
| <i>Micropterix aruncella</i>                                | County rarity                         | Recorded 2001   |

|                                    |                          |                              |
|------------------------------------|--------------------------|------------------------------|
| <i>Dichrorampha acuminatana</i>    | County rarity            | Recorded 2001                |
| <b>Diptera</b>                     |                          |                              |
| <i>Chorisops nagatomii</i>         | Nationally Notable       | Recorded 1997                |
| <i>Rhingia rostrata</i>            | Nationally Notable       | Recorded 2001                |
| <i>Pipizella virens</i>            | Nationally Notable       | Recorded 2001                |
| <i>Xanthogramma citrofasciatum</i> | County rarity            | Recorded 2001                |
| <b>Hymenoptera</b>                 |                          |                              |
| <i>Formica cunicularia</i>         | KWS                      | Recorded 2001                |
| <b>Reptiles</b>                    |                          |                              |
| Slow-worm                          | BAP3                     | Recorded 2001                |
| Adder                              | BAP3<br>KWS              | Recorded 2001                |
| Common lizard                      | KWS                      | Recorded 2001                |
| <b>Birds</b>                       |                          |                              |
| Spotted flycatcher                 | Red List<br>BAP Priority | Probably breeding 1997       |
| Song thrush                        | Red List<br>BAP Priority | Probably breeding 1997       |
| Starling                           | Red List                 | Recorded 1997                |
| House sparrow                      | Red List                 | Probably breeding 1997       |
| Green woodpecker                   | Amber List<br>BAP3       | Recorded 1997                |
| Dunnock                            | Amber List<br>BAP3       | Confirmed breeding 1997      |
| Mistle thrush                      | Amber List               | Probably breeding 1997       |
| Blue tit                           | BAP3                     | Confirmed breeding 1997      |
| Great tit                          | BAP3                     | Probably breeding 1997       |
| Nuthatch                           | BAP3                     | Probably breeding 1997       |
| Blackcap                           | BAP3                     | Probably breeding 1997       |
| Goldcrest                          | Amber List<br>BAP3       | Probably breeding 1997       |
| <b>Mammals</b>                     |                          |                              |
| Pipistrelle                        | BAP Priority             | Recorded 1997 Feeding ground |
| Noctule                            | BAP3                     | Recorded 1997 Feeding ground |
| Brown long-eared bat               | BAP3                     | Recorded 1997                |
| Badger                             | BAP3                     | Recorded 1997 Feeding ground |

### 2.2.3 Ideal Management Objectives

- Fulfil the owner & manager's legal obligations.
- Enhance the wildlife habitats and populations of rare species.
- Enhance the landscape value.
- Maintain, enhance and promote the historical interest.
- Provide for enhanced public access and use.
- Fulfil the site's educational and interpretation potential.
- Integrate the above with continued cemetery operations.

### 2.3 Rationale

**Grassland Management** - The cutting regime established during the first management plan aims to create a diversity of swards, ranging from regularly cut formal areas to tall, rank grass valuable for some invertebrates. Some areas are cut just once a year, others 2-3 times, formal areas cut regularly and some areas left uncut for up to two years. Once a year cuts, done in October, allows late flowering plants to seed and also maintains a tall grass habitat for late summer invertebrates. It is proposed that the area of existing formal grassland continues to be reduced, with every opportunity taken to leave areas uncut. Generally over the past five years mowing has been less severe than before, with blades

set higher.

All grass cuttings should be removed. Where strimming around gravestones all cuttings should be carefully brushed from the stone to prevent shading of lichens and care taken not to damage the basal stonework. Some cuttings can be heaped beneath trees to enrich soil conditions to benefit fungi.

The old cemetery is a rich seed-source. Seed could be collected and sown into scarified swards to diversify some of the grassland in the new cemetery. Any scrub and tree saplings developing at the edges of good grassland areas should be cut and killed by stump-treatment with herbicide.

Herbicide treatment of gravestones has cleared vegetation (hand-weeding is preferable but not practical) but not apparently had a detrimental effect on lichens, although continued careful use and monitoring is required

**Trees, Hedgerow & Woodland Management** - Many of the dead and poor condition trees identified in the first management plan have been made safe. Only those found during regular inspections to constitute a safety hazard are to be felled or pruned, with any deadwood on 'safe' trees to be left as a valuable wildlife habitat. Any wood felled is to be left on site as near to the parent tree as possible and in as large a piece as possible (as per current nature conservation practice and also to deter illegal removal of timber from the site). Trees causing or likely to cause damage to walls and other structures should be cut and treated with herbicide. Selective lopping of branches from trees casting a heavy shade over grassland areas is to continue. Many trees support a heavy ivy growth. Dense ivy is of conservation benefit, but some control is necessary, particularly in the upper reaches of trees where the weight can contribute to damage of the tree. **It is recommended that no work that could cause disturbance to nesting birds is carried out between the end of March and early September.**

No major tree planting is proposed for the old cemetery, *except for a new hedge along the western edge (to replace the unsightly and frequently broken fence- **still to be decided**)* and a few trees to perpetuate some of the original Victorian plantings (such as Corsican pine, Monterey cypress and Chinese Thuja) and as memorial plantings. The perimeter hedge should serve both as a barrier and wildlife habitat, so a dense planting of a hawthorn based hedge is proposed. Boundary hedges around the new cemetery should be improved for wildlife, including restocking gaps in the eastern edge or planting a completely new hedge along the actual site boundary after clearing sycamore. Some sycamore and evergreen trees and shrubs should be removed and these gaps replanted with native broad-leaves including hazel, hawthorn, blackthorn, goat willow, field maple, guelder-rose, buckthorn, spindle, wayfaring-tree, wild privet and crab apple, or where more appropriate, evergreens.

Some scattered tree planting should be done in the new cemetery to break-up the rather formal, regimented plantings of cherries and cultivar *Leylandii* and *Thuja*. Some of the rarer and unusual trees and shrubs in the old cemetery could be planted here, including cut-leaved lime, strawberry-tree, ash-leaf maple and cut-leaved hazel, as well as others to create a 'mini arboretum'. How about tree of heaven, monkey puzzle, Judas tree and Indian bean tree? The central avenues of flowering cherries are diseased and should be gradually removed and replaced by ?????

**Wetland** - A pond/marsh area would increase biodiversity. The only suitable site, in the bottom south-east corner of the new cemetery, is likely to be needed for burials so no wetland creation is currently proposed.

**Buildings and Structures** - There are a few proposals to modify existing structures and provide new ones to enhance wildlife. These include (Listed Building Consent permitting); creating access holes for summer roosting bats in the Chapel, adapting a brick-arched structure to serve as a winter bat hibernaculum, erecting additional bird-boxes of various designs, changing security lights to moth-attracting bulbs and providing untreated wood bench-seats to attract wood-substrate lichens.

**Research, Education and Interpretation** - The site is ideal for research, education and monitoring and for some interpretation, such as laying out a nature trail with associated boards and/or leaflets. Some information about the site could also be placed in local museums, libraries and schools and on STC and SDC web-sites. Interpretation should describe and explain the wildlife and historical features and the management done to maintain and enhance these. An important part of the interpretation will be to get people to understand and accept 'messy, unkempt, untidy' grassland. One of the main attractions, particularly of the old cemetery, is its peaceful, secluded nature so any encouragement of public access should be in keeping with the tranquil nature of the site. The site supports important habitats and species that should be monitored.

The above are the overall objectives and work proposals for the whole site. The site has been divided into 21 survey and management compartments, shown on Map 2. More detailed descriptions of the aims and proposals for each compartment are given below.

**Compartment A** - A steep bank with very thin soils, suffering from some erosion up a worn path and around the bench-seat. An annual late summer cut and rake of grass is proposed. Other proposals are felling the large sycamore (which is shading the grassland and restricting the view of/from the Chapel), cutting laburnum shrubs and removal of some of the overhanging lime, yew and birch limbs.

**Compartment B** - Flower-rich grassland formerly with a mixed mowing regime, now simplified to an annual cut in October.

**Compartment C** - An area of rank grass and tall herb vegetation amongst gravestones, which makes cutting difficult. Biennial cutting of larger patches of rank grass/herb and removal of vegetation encroaching over selected gravestones is proposed to enhance both wildlife and historical features. Retention of dense shrub areas as they provide good wildlife habitat, but cutting to prevent spread in to the grassland, plus control of any sycamore saplings and regular coppicing of *Buddlejas*.

**Compartment D** - A mostly rank grassland area important for invertebrates which require tall grass swards. The grass is to be cut every two years in October, alternating the cutting with cpt E. Planting of a mixed hedge of native trees and shrubs along the western edge was proposed in the initial plan. This is still for discussion, as they are likely to be vandalism problems. Another suggestion is to plant a variety of climbers (honeysuckles and *Clematis*) along the fence.

**Compartment E** - Similar to cpt D. Same grassland management needed. Cut D one year and E the other. Clear ivy from an oak with good lichen cover.

**Compartment F** - An excellent herb-rich sward. Annual late summer grass cut and control of encroaching tree saplings and scrub is required, including cutting turkey oaks and keeping edges of dense shrubs cut back. The lower limbs of mature limes and horse-chestnut are shading the top edge of the grassland, so raising the crown of these is proposed. Carry out some ivy control, including clearing from trees with good lichen cover.

**Compartment G** - Annual late summer grass cut, regular mowing of paths to tended graves and utting back edges of dense shrubs. Tree work includes pruning lower limbs shading the grassland.

**Compartment H** - Similar management to cpt C, alternating a biennial late summer cutting of rank grass/tall herb vegetation between the two areas. Control of scrub encroachment, cutting back edges of dense shrubs and pruning large yew to reduce shading of grassland.

**Compartment I** - The formal, closely cropped sward in the garden of remembrance area by the main site entrance should be maintained. The biodiversity has been enhanced over the past five years by cutting the rest of the area in late summer and planting of wildflowers in beds, which should continue.

**Compartment J** - Thinning work done in the previous plan has benefited the ground flora and also encouraged natural regeneration of native hazel and hawthorn. These should be encouraged by weeding. The extra light has also promoted a vigorous growth of *Clematis*, which needs controlling by regular hand pulling. In the north-east corner an area of tall herb has been mainly cleared of elder and sycamore scrub, although continuous control is required. A few (3-4 specimens) of conifer species typical of the cemetery, eg Monterey cypress and Corsican pine, can now be planted.

**Compartment K** - Control encroaching shrubby edges and manage the grassland by a biennial late summer cut. Remove some lower branches from limes and other trees shading the grassland.

**Compartment L** - Biennial late summer cutting of grass, alternating years with cpt K. Cutting back of encroaching bramble, *Clematis*, sycamore etc has enhanced the area of open grassland. However this clearance has encouraged a growth docks and other ruderal plants which should be cut in early summer prior to seeding. Remove lower limbs from limes along the southern edge to reduce shading of the grassland.

**Compartment M** - Selective cutting of sycamore, laurel and conifers and coppicing lime to open the canopy over oak saplings. Annual late summer cut of the small herb-rich grass area and control of encroaching scrub here and on the open slope behind the Chapel. Coppicing of a group of trees causing damage to the boundary wall and felling a group of mature sycamore. The latter to be left as large timber, to provide deadwood habitat and prevent easy removal. The dense laurel hedge along the top boundary has been heavily cut back. The inside edge will hopefully gradually convert to grassland, although regular cutting of laurel regrowth and ruderal species will be needed. The brick-arched structure could be adapted to make it suitable for a winter bat hibernaculum.

**Compartment N** - No specific work needed.

**Compartment O** - Formerly a close mown sward around regularly visited graves, now enhanced by leaving areas around less well visited graves uncut. This should continue with 25-50% uncut until late summer, assessed each year. Diversify tree and shrub plantings with more interesting and wildlife friendly species, including some that characterise the old cemetery. Gradual replacement of the avenue of diseased cherries with ???, possibly as a site for memorial plantings.

**Compartment P** - The wildlife and landscape value of this hedge would be enhanced by some additional removal of sycamore and evergreen trees and shrubs and restocking. The lower section, shaded by trees outside the site, is suitable for planting attractive and wildlife-friendly evergreens, such as hollies...? Gaps in the top section, unshaded, could be restocked with native species, including hazel, field maple, hawthorn, wayfaring-tree, spindle, goat willow, dog-rose, blackthorn, buckthorn, wild privet and barberry.

**Compartment Q** - Cut the small herb-rich grassland area annually in late summer. Extensive removal of sycamore and evergreen shrubs has created gaps along the western wall; these could be planted with a mix of attractive evergreens and/or honeysuckles and other climbers. The cleared area along the top eastern section should be allowed to regenerate as dense blackthorn/dogwood scrub, cutting back edges to prevent spread into grassland and to create a graded, uneven-aged structure (part of this area may be taken for graves). Establishment of a mixed hedge of native species, including hazel, guelder-rose, wild privet, wayfaring-tree, buckthorn and spindle, along the eastern boundary. This will require felling of large sycamore and cutting back elm and blackthorn, but retaining fine field maples. Cutting large sycamore will open-up views into the cemetery and across the valley.

**Compartment R** - Cut cherries. Cut grass in late summer. This bank is a potential area for planting of memorial trees (native species preferred)

**Compartment S** - Continue current management. Long-term use of this area to be decided; may be

taken for burials.

**Compartment T** - Long-term use of this area to be decided. Cutting of the rank grassland.

**Compartment U** - Long-term use of this area to be decided.

**Chapel of Rest** - Increase the building's value to bats by providing access holes so bats can use it as a summer roost and replace lights with moth-attracting bulbs.

**Other Work** - The erection of bird boxes and untreated wooden benches for lichen colonisation.

### 3 PRESCRIPTIONS

#### 3.1 Work Programme

The work programme for this site covers five years: 2003 to 2008.

Year 1 Financial Year 2003/04 Year 2 Financial Year 2004/05 Year 3 Financial Year 2005/06  
Year 4 Financial Year 2006/07 Year 5 Financial Year 2007/08

For some of the work fixed years are not given, but proposed for completion over a 2-3 year period when resources are available.

##### Compartment A

- |       |   |          |
|-------|---|----------|
| Ai)   | Cut/rake grass (October).   | Annual   |
| Aii)  | Fell large sycamore & cut laburnums.                                | Year 1-2 |
| Aiii) | Prune overhanging lime & yew branches & raise crown of large birch. | Year 1   |

##### Compartment B

- |     |                           |        |
|-----|---------------------------|--------|
| Bi) | Cut/rake grass (October). | Annual |
|-----|---------------------------|--------|

##### Compartment C

- |       |  |             |
|-------|--|-------------|
| Ci)   | Cut encroaching scrub and sycamore saplings. | Years 1,3,5 |
| Cii)  | Cut/rake tall grass/herb (October).          | Years 1,3,5 |
| Ciii) | Coppice <i>Buddleja</i>                      | Annual      |

##### Compartment D

- |       |  |             |
|-------|--|-------------|
| Di)   | Cut/rake grassland (October).  | Years 1,3,5 |
| Dii)  | <i>Plant hedge along western boundary (winter). Hawthorn (70%), hazel (15%), the remaining 15% composed of spindle, guelder-rose, wayfaring-tree, goat willow, wild privet &amp; buckthorn. Weed or herbicide annually. or plant climbers eg honeysuckle, clematis along fenceline</i> <b>For discussion</b> | Year 1-2    |
| Diii) | Fell sycamore in south-west corner shrub area  | Year 2      |

##### Compartment E

- |      |  |             |
|------|--|-------------|
| Ei)  | Cut/rake grass (October).                        | Years 2 & 4 |
| Eii) | Clear ivy from oak (629) with good lichen cover. | Year 1-2    |

##### Compartment F

- |      |   |        |
|------|---|--------|
| Fi)  | Cut/rake grass (October).   | Annual |
| Fii) | Fell Turkey oaks in grassland edge at east end & prune lower limbs of pedunculate oak | Year 1 |

- Fiii) Cut back sycamore & laurel at edges of shrub areas & fell sycamore (690) & saplings in thicket in south-west corner Year 2
- Fiv) Prune overhanging limbs of lime, horse-chestnut along top edge Year 2
- Fv) Clear ivy from selected trees with good lichen cover Year 2

### **Compartment G**

- Gi) Cut/rake grass (October). Annual
- Gii) Cut back encroaching edges of shrub blocks. Years 1,3,5
- Giii) Raise crown on ash, limes etc shading grassland Year 2

### **Compartment H**

- Hi) Cut encroaching bramble & sycamore and edges of dense shrub areas Years 2 & 4
- Hii) Cut/rake grass/tall herb (October). Years 2 & 4
- Hiii) Prune lower limbs of mature yew. Year 2

### **Compartment I**

- Ii) Regular mowing of garden of remembrance area. Annual
- Iii) Cut/rake rest of grassland (October). Annual

### **Compartment J**

- Ji) Hand weed *Clematis*, cut sycamore & weed around young hazel & hawthorn. Annual
- Jii) Cut encroaching *Acer* from grass edge in south-west corner. Year 1
- Jiii) Clear ivy from good lichen cover horse-chestnut (614). Year 1-2
- Jv) In north-east corner; cut tall herb & cut/treat sycamore. Replant with specimen conifers, such as Corsican pine & Monterey cypress. Weed plantings annually. Year 1

### **Compartment K**

- Ki) Cut/rake grass (October). Years 1,3,5
- Kii) Cut back edges of shrub blocks. Years 1 & 5
- Kiii) Prune lower limbs of limes & Turkey oak Year 2

### **Compartment L**

- Li) Cut/rake grass (October). Years 2 & 4
- Lii) Cut docks & other tall herbage along top edge in early summer. Annual
- Liii) Prune lower limbs of limes. Year 2

### **Compartment M**

- Mi) Open canopy over young oaks by selective felling of sycamore, laurel & conifers & coppicing lime. Prune oaks. Year 2
- Mii) Cut/rake small grass area & cut/treat encroaching scrub. Cut oak saplings. Annual
- Miii) Coppice group of rowan, whitebeam & ash & fell dead sycamore by top access. Year 1
- Miv) Cut outside edge of laurel hedge. Year 1
- Mv) Cut inside of laurel hedge and suckers in grassland re-establishment area. Years 2 & 4
- Mvi) Cut thistles and other ruderal species in early summer. Annual
- Mvii) Fell group of mature sycamores and leave as large timber Year 1
- Mviii) *Modify brick-arch structure to be suitable for bat hibernacula. ???*

### **Compartment N**

#### **Compartment O**

- Oi) Cut/rake c25-50% grassland (October). Mow remaining grassland regularly. Annual
- Oii) Fell 2-3 flowering cherries and replant with ??? eg Corsican pine, Monterey cypress, cut-leaved lime, strawberry-tree, ash-leaf maple & cut-leaved hazel. Selected planting of these species elsewhere in cpt. Annual

#### **Compartment P**

- Pi) Clear sections of sycamore, laurel & conifers & restock with native trees & shrubs, along top west section and evergreen shrubs along the lower west section. Year 1-2

#### **Compartment Q**

- Qi) Cut small grassland area (October). Annual
- Qii) Plant evergreens/climbers along open wall sections. Year 1-2
- Qiii) Cut edge of blackthorn & dogwood. Annual
- Qiv) Fell sycamore and cut elm, blackthorn. Plant mixed native hedge. Year 2

#### **Compartment R**

- Ri) Cut cherries. Year 1-2
- Rii) Cut/rake grass (October) Annual

#### **Compartment S**

Si) Regular cutting of grass. Annual

### **Compartment T**

Ti) Cut/rake tall grass/herb (October). Annual

### **Compartment U**

Ui) Removal of spoil as & when required.

### **Chapel of Rest**

CRi) Make bat access holes in south, west & east walls. Year 1-2

CRii) Replace security light bulbs with moth attracting bulbs. Year 1-2

### **Other Structural Work**

OSi) Erect additional bird nest-boxes. Year 1-2

OSii) Install untreated/unpainted wood benches. Year 1-2

OSiii) Boundary wall maintenance. Annual

### **Survey and Monitoring**

SMi) Monitor bat boxes & Chapel of Rest/hibernacula following enhancement works Annual

SMiii) Monitor selected invertebrates, such as glow-worms & butterflies. Annual

SMiv) Re-survey invertebrate populations. Year 4-5

SMv) Monitor bird boxes. Annual

SMvi) Re-survey lichen populations. Year 4-5

SMvii) Take fixed-point photographs. Years 2 & 5

### **Interpretation and Education**

IEi) Design & layout/waymark nature trail with associated display boards/leaflet.

IEii) Prepare material to display in schools, libraries, museums, council offices & on web-sites.

IEiii) Promote site for use by local schools and public.

### **General**

GNi) Review & update Management Plan. Annual

GNii) Prepare new 5 year Management Plan. Year 5

## **Appendix 1 Species List**

## Appendix 2 Key Wildlife Site Notification

### GLOUCESTERSHIRE WILDLIFE TRUST

#### PROPOSED KEY WILDLIFE SITE

##### SITE DETAILS

|                      |                      |                  |          |
|----------------------|----------------------|------------------|----------|
| <b>1. Site Name:</b> | Bisley Road Cemetery | <b>Ref No:</b>   | SO80/    |
| <b>District:</b>     | Stroud               | <b>Parish:</b>   | Stroud   |
| <b>Area:</b>         | 4.1ha.               | <b>Grid Ref:</b> | SO864038 |

#### 2. Site Description

##### a) Summary Description

The site lies on moderate to steeply sloping south-facing ground on the eastern edge of Stroud. Stroud Town Council manages it with advice from Gloucestershire Wildlife Management, on behalf of Stroud District Council. The site comprises the Victorian Chapel of Rest, old gravestones, unimproved limestone grassland, scrub, plantation woodland, specimen trees and boundary walls. There is open access.

##### b) Ecological Interest

The results of a full ecological survey are still being collated. The unimproved grassland supports a good variety of plants typical of the CG3 and CG5 NVC communities (there are also MG1 areas). Species present include Pyramidal Orchid (*Anacamptis pyramidalis*), Fragrant Orchid (*Gymnadenia conopsea*), Kidney Vetch (*Anthyllis vulneraria*), Yellow-wort (*Blackstonia perfoliata*), Harebell (*Campanula rotundifolia*), Greater Knapweed (*Centaurea scabiosa*), Common Rock-rose (*Helianthemum nummularium*), Field Scabious (*Knautia arvensis*), Marjoram (*Origanum vulgare*), Fairy Flax (*Linum catharticum*), Salad Burnet (*Sanguisorba minor*), Upright Brome (*Bromopsis erecta*), Quaking-grass (*Briza media*) and Downy Oat-grass (*Avenula pubescens*). Woodland and scrub areas contain White Helleborine (*Cephalanthera damasonium*), Broad-leaved Helleborine (*Epipactis helleborine*) and Wood Meadow-grass (*Poa nemoralis*).

The site supports excellent invertebrate populations, with records for 8 Nationally Scarce/RDB and many locally uncommon species. These include; Rufous Grasshopper, Ox-eye Lacebug, Cramp-ball Fungus Weevil, Juniper Shieldbug, Glow-worm, Dingy Skipper and Brown Argus. The site meets four invertebrate KWS criteria alone.

There are records of Noctule Bat, although probably not roosting on site.

J.Doe  
4/12/97

Mr K May  
Director of Environmental Services  
Stroud District Council  
Ebley Mill  
Westward Road  
Stroud  
GL5 4UB

6th May 1998

Dear Mr May

### **Key Wildlife Site - Bisley Road Cemetery, Stroud**

I am writing with reference to the above site that is owned by Stroud District Council.

This site is known to be of significant conservation importance and has just been designated a Key Wildlife Site. These are sites considered by the Gloucestershire Wildlife Trust to be of at least county significance. This site is unique in the county, being the only cemetery in over 900 currently designated Key Wildlife Sites. It is also unusual in being in a semi-urban location. The site fulfils many of the criteria needed for designation, including flower-rich grassland and the presence of nationally and locally rare invertebrates.

A summary of the conservation importance is enclosed along with the Key Wildlife Site proposal form approved by the Trust's Conservation Committee.

We understand that a management plan for the site is currently being prepared for Stroud Town Council by Gloucestershire Wildlife Management Ltd. The Trust applauds this initiative that can only benefit this already important area.

Yours sincerely

Rosie Cliffe  
Assistant Conservation Officer