



St Ann's Allotments

Hungerhill Developments Ltd - part of The Renewal Trust 

St Ann's Allotments Management and Maintenance Plan Chapter two

Chapter 2 – Management and Maintenance Plan

Please note this document was written in 2019 so some information has changed and may be out of date.

The following chapter contains ideas and emerging themes from time spent by the consultants with Directors, Staff, Project Leads and Community Stakeholders based on site. These have yet to be consulted on and as such the reader should not consider these 'Final'. Consultation will commence in June 2022 and run through to December 2022 to allow maximum engagement.

Below is a brief timeline from funding being awarded to present day to give some context to this document.

- HLF funding was awarded in May 2019.
- Work tendered out and consultants appointed in September 2019.
- March 2020 the county went into lockdown due to the Covid-19 pandemic.
- The Allotment Team focussed on keeping the site open for plot holders only.
- Project files were completed with an evaluation report and filed with HLF in December 2020.
- During 2021, the ongoing restrictions affected tenants, visitors and staff alike with the visitor centre remaining closed.
- Covid safe one-to-one vacant plot tours returned in May 2021 along with a plant swap and sale. This valuable social event, evidenced the caution with which people were reconnecting.
- From spring of 2021 we focussed on proactive site management, which has involved a degree of 'catch up; for the time when operations were negatively impacted during various lockdowns/restrictions.

Through our Newsletters we have tried to communicate the site priorities for reopening along with information about the two specific areas of work – 'starter plots' and 'woodland plots' along with the success of DEFRA funding for the New Roots programme.

3.2 Future Strategic Aims

The strategic aims for the future management of the allotments linked to the masterplan and business plan for the site are as follows:

St Ann's Allotments and Gardens – a welcoming greenspace

- Maintain a safe, accessible and welcoming environment for the purpose of allotment gardening and recreation across 75 acres of green space
- Protect and conserve key heritage features, assets and nature conservation by overseeing all site projects and programmes of work
- Ensure maximum tenant occupancy by providing high quality of customer service and tenancy management
- Prioritise funding and the delivery of projects that invest in site infrastructure, facilities and conservation
- Increase volunteer opportunities for gardeners, local people and businesses and enhance skills through training
- Develop a Site Partnership Forum to strengthen connections and create opportunities to deliver exciting events and activities
- Increase allotment holder awareness and participation in projects that benefit the site, through regular consultation and focus groups
- Improve the wellbeing of our communities by promoting and supporting healthy living events and environmental activities and education
- Promote the significance of the sites history, natural heritage and diversity of the allotment and wider community benefits through local, regional and national campaigns

In doing this a wide range of benefits will be secured:

- Conserve and enhance the heritage of the allotments, both physical and cultural.

- Maximise use and plot uptake making ongoing maintenance more viable and protecting the allotments in the future.
- Contribute to regeneration and to the health and welfare of local people.
- Make a positive environmental and ecological impact.
- Provide opportunities for education, training, recreation and community development.
- Increase access and involvement with the allotments.

3.3 Masterplan Proposals

The aim of the masterplan development, linked to the business plan and this management plan, is to enhance the allotments in a phased approach, so as to

- attract more plot holders to take up plots
- expand the use of hard-to-let plots,
- increase awareness of the site through marketing
- expand the offer attracting more visitors to the site
- generate income from a range of commercial activities that sustain the restored assets
- allow for future investment to restore assets in need
- develop a strong partner and volunteer base in order to secure their long term future.

The masterplan seeks to enhance the site for a range of groups already using the site, for bio-diversity and wildlife, for allowing a deprived community access to green space, to tell the historic story of the place, for education, and for social, mental and physical wellbeing.

The Masterplan:

Resulting from the consultation process the design has taken the needs of all stakeholders into consideration along with the financial aspirations for the site. The masterplan seeks to strike a balance between the requirements of each group and the need for income generation to ensure that St Ann's Allotments thrives in the future.

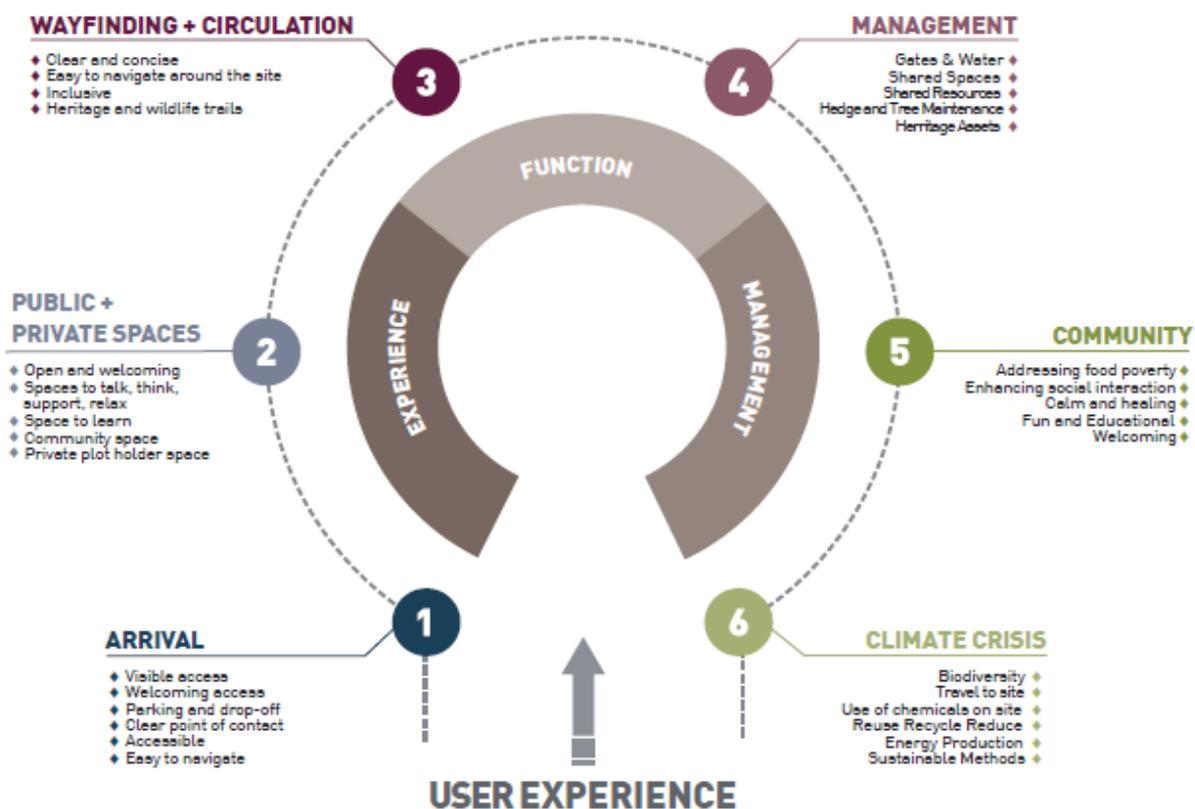
- **Public and Private Zones:** The site has been organised into zones to allow the allotments to have a public and private presence. This is crucial to the future success of the site, to encourage further community engagement and to enhance the connection between the local community and the site. The public face of the proposals creates a zone for income generation targeted at the general public. Public and private zones have been allocated with activity level differing in each zone. The masterplan respects the plot holders and the existing organisation which are already offering wonderful opportunity for groups to engage with the site.
- **Signage and Access:** To be able to attract public into the site the entrance signage must be improved. Vehicular entrances must clear and the site well signposted from surrounding areas, the city centre and the road network. A brown sign scheme should be considered. Pedestrian entrances should be equally clear and facilities for cycle storage should be included. The masterplan identifies important nodes where signage should be located. New gates will also include an enhanced security and access arrangement and this has formed part of an assessment of parking requirements.
- **The Heart:** The masterplan identifies a heart to the site. This is where there will be a hub of activity within the private zone. The ambition is to create an area where plot holders can socialise, to encourage connection between individuals, groups and organisations and will include additional features such as a reflection garden with a new wildlife pond. Located centrally with shared facilities such as car parks and compost toilets it is a place where plot holders can meet and socialise with the opportunity to hold events aimed solely at the plot holders. Events such as apple days, plant swaps, seed swaps, produce sharing, BBQ's, the annual show and coffee mornings would be ideal for this location. This location includes Oliver's Lodge and the Perry Orchard where there is already a natural hive of activity to build on. An amphitheatre for events is proposed, along with a wildlife pond and a memorial garden. The heritage route passes through this area and provides a destination/resting place along the route.
- **Ecology:** Conservation and ecology is an important strand to the masterplan and areas have been allocated specifically for wildlife planting. Part of this includes plots which are allocated for wildlife enhancement only.

- Heritage: A heritage trail has been identified which allows visitors to walk the site, taking in the site's most significant historical features. An interpretation and signage strategy will need to be developed to support this. A heritage assessment has been undertaken as part of this masterplan.

3.4 Masterplan Themes

The themes from which the masterplan has been developed are presented below.

Place Appendix visual



3.5 Management Objectives

The objectives represent the areas of priority for HDL, key stakeholders and ploholders and set the framework for an approach to achieve the vision for the allotments. They are intrinsically linked to the strategic aims and will drive future management and maintenance of the site, inform the programme development over the next ten years, and directly influence the allocation of valuable resources.

The management objectives are as follows:

1. Maintain the site and its facilities.
2. Prioritise clearance of plots and increase the number of let plots across the site.
3. Conserve plots through tenancy management within the current legal framework.
4. Ensure diversity of fruit trees is managed, maintained and developed and improve arboricultural maintenance across the site.
5. Ensure robust partnership and management structures continue.
6. Maintain an Allotment Visitor Centre and display gardens for public access.
7. Maintain a database of historical plot information and historical documentation relating to the site for managed public access.
8. Monitor and maintain historical structures and artefacts across the site, including historic hedge layout.
9. Continue to develop awareness of the site with the public and enable managed public access to the site.
10. Manage and maintain conservation areas.
11. Ensure tenant and volunteer involvement in managing the site.
12. Develop partnerships to support continued management and maintenance of the site.
13. Ensure the site is managed so it has a positive impact on the environment.
14. Improve entrances and interpretation across the site to encourage more people to use and visit the site.

The objectives do not define each component of work that is required. This is described in more detail in the action plan section of the document - 4.2. The objectives are therefore linked to the action plan by setting SMART targets (Specific; Measurable; Achievable; Realistic and Time-related) have been set against each of the objectives in the action plan. Periodic assessments of performance will be undertaken in order to determine success in achieving the stated aims and objectives. See the monitoring and review section - 5.1.

Summary

Mission

"To protect and preserve the heritage of St Ann's Allotments and secure a sustainable and resilient future for local gardeners and as a resource for the wider community".

Aims

Ensure Long-term Sustainable Management and Maintenance of the Allotments.

Promote as an asset for neighbourhood renewal and environmental sustainability.

Ensure the site is managed and administered effectively and efficiently.

Improve the financial position through implementation of the business plan.

Objectives

Secure funding to Implement a phased approach to the Masterplan.

Actively seek involvement of wider partners, stakeholders and volunteers.

Support the training and development of staff, volunteers and stakeholders.

The following Master Plan themed walks have been organised for Gardeners and Site Stakeholders to attend and participate in:

Starter Plot Tour - Tuesday 21 June, 2pm to 4pm

Community Open Day on the Starter Plots - Saturday 25 June, 11am to 12pm

New Roots – A wild walk to the sycamore terraces - Tuesday 12 July, 11am to 12noon and Tuesday 19 July, 6pm to 7pm

Chapter 3 of the Management Plan puts forward the consultant's recommendations and analysis based on the research and data collected so far, as well as the contributions from community stakeholders, staff and partners.