Framfield Churchyard Management Plan

(*Updated August 2011 to reflect comments received and dates implemented*)

S Clifton (on behalf of Steering Group)

Contents List

1 Introduction

Background

Framfield Church is blessed with a wonderful churchyard, covering just over 0.8 hectares. The principal parts of the present church building were constructed between 1200 and 1250, and most of the churchyard has clearly been used as a burial site for several centuries (though there are records of an extension in about 1890). Being protected from any kind of development (past, present and future), churchyards like that at Framfield have been able to steadily develop their biodiversity resources in harmony with their original purpose for burial. For many years Christians and others have become increasingly aware of the opportunity and responsibility for wildlife conservation that go with having an ancient churchyard. To quote Chichester Diocese Management of Rural Churchyards:

"Recent agricultural practices,.....widespread loss of meadowland and grassland, and the increased use of chemicals both on agricultural land and in gardens, all mean that churchyards, which are usually carved out of ancient pastures and often remarkably rich in species, have a very important role as sanctuaries for wildlife.....As stewards of God's creation we therefore need to draw up appropriate management plans with care, taking appropriate advice."[1]

The Churchyard and its Functions

Like most rural churchyards, the predominant habitat type in Framfield churchyard is grassland. For this reason, the initial focus of this Draft Plan is the management of grassland (though other important habitats and features will need to be incorporated into the Plan in due course). The churchyard also has diverse, well-structured hedges around at least one third of its boundaries. There are numerous specimen trees scattered over the churchyard, one of which is classed as 'Veteran', and others planted at various times for commemorative purposes. The care and management of the gravestones also needs to be addressed within this Plan.

The prime functions of the churchyard are:

- Burial and memorial
- Access and Recreation: a public place for reflection and for walkers
- Conservation of important wildlife resources, in accordance with God's mandate to be responsible for his creation
- As a setting for the church building and its various uses.

Purpose of a Churchyard Management Plan

[1] In the light of this diocesan policy guidance, it seems unlikely that the actual Churchyard Management Plan would require a 'faculty' from the diocesan chancellor. However, dialogue with other churches in the diocese would be extremely useful, especially those with relevant experience.

The main purpose of a Churchyard Management Plan is to take account of all these functions, and enable the church and community to integrate management of the churchyard in a way that best supports all its functions, making optimum use of the resources available.

While different churchyards vary greatly in size, age, setting, and social and economic context, there are some issues common to virtually all of them. Perhaps the most prevalent is how to balance the call for a tidy and 'cared-for' appearance with the need to sustain and celebrate wildlife resources (considered by some to indicate 'untidiness'). One way of addressing this challenge is 'zoning' the management regime to reflect the prominence of different functions in various areas of the churchyard. An important element of this approach is to make the management goals clear, for example which zones are deliberately being left for plants to flower and seed at particular times of year, and for animal life to thrive, and which areas are being managed mainly for amenity/appearance purposes.

At present, the mowing regime is similar (more or less in rotation) over the whole churchyard, with perhaps slightly more time spent on areas nearest to the church and around the newest burials. It is carried out by a small number of very hard-working individuals, and the frequency of mowing is largely dependent on the availability of labour, which is always a key limiting factor. There is rarely time for any raking up of grass. Operating the same management regime over the whole area must feel a bit like painting the Forth Bridge – never-ending. It is understood that current expenditure is around £400/year.

The main benefits of varying the mowing regime in different zones are as follows:

- Less frequent mowing of conservation areas not only improves their wildlife value but frees up time which can be spent on more regular close-mowing of amenity areas;

- Overall costs (financial and time spent) are likely to be less rather than more, since the total amount of mowing required is likely to be less;

- Managing older parts of the churchyard for conservation would allow the wild flowers to set seed, and thereby increase. (The area currently proposed for conservation management is less than a quarter of the total);

- Having a predominant management objective for a zone need not in any way detract from management preferences for individual recent graves within that zone;

- The plant composition in different zones mown in the same way each year at agreed times becomes better suited to their agreed functions, i.e closely-mown amenity grassland becomes neater and tidier; conservation grassland becomes more diverse both botanically and in the range of butterflies, moths, bees, crickets, grasshoppers, slow worms, birds etc that volunteers will increasingly see while doing the work;

- Having a clear Management Plan agreed by those carrying out the work, and displayed in the shed with the equipment, would probably attract more volunteers, and make it easier for them to drop in and do useful work at times which suit them;

- Having a more varied management regime would make the work more interesting;

- Volunteers will have the satisfaction of seeing how different styles of management bring out different potential in grassland zones;

- The increase in wildlife would allow the beauty of flower-rich grassland and the animal life it supports to be seen and enjoyed, and actually enhance the experience for people using the churchyard for recreation and reflection;

- It would demonstrate our care for the natural world;

- Having a good Management Plan is likely to be useful in applying for grants *(to be explored).*

Hundreds of churches all over the UK and elsewhere are now successfully adopting this approach; some of these are illustrated in Appendix II. However, it is recognised that any change to the churchyard management will only be successful if the church (people) and community 'buy into it'. Engaging not only their acceptance but their active involvement in development of a Management Plan is critical to its continued implementation. It is recommended that while the Plan would have clear goals and programming, changes should be introduced gradually over a number of years, and both their ecological effects and the response of church and community should be carefully monitored and reviewed. The recommended Review Period is every three years.

The Plan may also need to be updated when further surveys have been carried out to determine the distribution and abundance of Slow Worm and any other protected species[2].

2 Needs and Resources of the Different Functions

Burial and Memorial

At any one time, most new burials take place within the same zone. Occasionally older graves are re-used for family members, but these tend to be in areas relatively recently used for burial. In general, recent graves are more likely to be cared for by friends and family, in accordance with their own criteria. The areas of older graves are generally more likely to develop wildlife interest. However, in areas with mostly older but a few more recent graves, different management of individual graves would be possible without detracting in any way from an overall policy for a particular management zone.

In addition, there are a number of trees around the churchyard planted as memorials. While the preferences of relatives/friends for the management regime immediately around these memorial trees (broadly, Amenity or Conservation), this need not detract from an overall management regime.

The Remembrance Garden surface is comprised of plaques set in gravel. Colonisation by native species is discouraged in this area.

Access and Recreation

There is a network of short-grass paths through, and around much of the boundary of, the churchyard. This allows access to graves, especially more recent ones, and to the Remembrance Garden. There is also a Public Right of Way (paved with traditional brick) through the churchyard from the lychgate down the main entrance path to the church, then round its eastern side. It continues as a grass path along part of the southern boundary. From here the PRoW links with a number of popular walks through beautiful countryside to the south and east. Consequently the churchyard is regularly used by walkers with and without dogs, as well as visitors to the graves, and others who may come to use the churchyard as a quiet outdoor space in which to reflect and enjoy wildlife.

The facilities provided for visitors include a number of seats, a tap and watering can beside the Remembrance Garden, a compost heap for vegetation waste and a dustbin for non-vegetation waste associated with the functions of the churchyard. These last two facilities are

[2] That is, species protected by legislation (such as the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981) from intentional or reckless killing or injury. These include all reptile and amphibian species, bats and nesting birds.

in the south-eastern corner, where there is also a bonfire site used by managers of the churchyard.

Wildlife Resources

This account is based on surveys undertaken in the past few years, and also on previous records kindly provided for us by Sussex Biodiversity Records Centre (SxBRC).

Habitats

It is understood that a botanical survey of the churchyard was undertaken in the 1991 by Pat Donovan of the Sussex Botanical Recording Society; at the time of writing, the results of this survey have not yet been located. An extended Phase 1 Habitat Survey was carried out over several visits in spring and summer of 2007. This included recording of higher plant species visible at the time of survey and identification of habitat with potential to support protected species. 134 plant species were recorded during this survey; a list is provided in Appendix II. The following paragraphs summarise the habitats present in the churchyard; the presence of, and potential habitat for, protected species is described below.

By far the most widespread habitat type present is grassland. Its diversity and ecological significance vary in response to a number of factors, including how recently it has been used for burials, its past and present management regime, and its proximity to complementary habitats.

Species-rich Semi-improved Neutral Grassland[3]***.***

Much of the grassland around older gravestones, some of which has been relatively undisturbed (apart from mowing) for many decades or even centuries, supports this habitat. It is the most species-rich habitat, with over 80 plant species including indicators of ecologically important grassland such as Common Knapweed, Barren Strawberry, Bluebell, Primrose, Hairy Sedge, Hoary Plantain and Meadow Buttercup. The areas zoned in Figure 1 as High-diversity Conservation Grassland are mostly this habitat, with a few areas of slightly less species-rich grassland included to maintain habitat connectivity.

Some other areas (shown on the previous version of this Plan) are also High Diversity; however consultations with those currently responsible for mowing indicate that if vegetation is allowed to grow long in areas of closely-spaced stonework, mowing becomes extremely difficult. It has therefore been agreed that areas with closely-spaced stonework will continue to be managed as Amenity Grassland.

Relatively Species-poor Semi-improved Neutral Grassland and Improved Grassland

Most of the remaining grassland in the churchyard would fit on the spectrum between these two categories. These tend to have a slightly higher proportion of species such as Perennial Rye-grass, Dandelion, Daisy and White Clover, as well as many of the species found in the best grassland. (They are zoned in Figure 1 as Fairly Diverse Grassland.)

Amenity Grassland

Although some of the grassland closest to the church and along much of the path network is managed chiefly for amenity, it is nearly all relatively diverse for Amenity Grassland, but has fewer of the species indicating ecologically important grassland.

Species-rich (Largely) Native Hedges

[3] Some of this is possibly National Vegetation Classification MG5

The most diverse hedges are those along the northern side of the churchyard. Since they border gardens they would not be subject to the Hedgerow Regulations 1997 (which have criteria for identifying 'Important Hedges' worthy of special protection). However the diversity of their shrubs (10 species) and ground flora (26 species), possible presence of protected animal species (see below), value as flight lines for foraging bats and good structure likely to support nesting birds, all confirm their high ecological value.

Species-poor Native Hedges

The hedge just west of the lych gate has comparatively low plant species diversity, being mostly Cypress, but is well-structured and therefore still likely to be of vallue for nesting birds, foraging bats and invertebrates.

Defunct Hedges

It is understood that a previous hedge along the southern boundary was removed some years ago. However, the ground flora includes plant species indicative of ancient hedges (Dog's Mercury Mercury, Barren Strawberry, Lords-and-Ladies, Wood Avens). However, some shrubs remain from this former hedge, and together with its associated ground flora it is also important for at least one protected animal species (see below).

Specimen Trees and Shrubs

A variety of native and non-native trees and shrubs have been planted in the churchyard over many years. Apart from the rows of small, closely clipped Yews bordering the main entrance path, there has been no overall plan to the planting. A number of trees have been planted in memory of particular people; some of these have memorial plaques.

The Field Maple just north of the church hall was recorded on the Woodland Trust Ancient Tree Hunt website in 2008 as a Veteran tree. It has two stems, and possibly was originally one stem that split some time in the past. There are several fairly mature Yews, though it has been confirmed that none of these are Veterans. There are also a few fairly mature Weeping Ash around the centre of the churchyard, and the mature Oak on the northern boundary could be classed as a Notable tree (future Veteran). (Alison Wright[4] *pers. comm*).

Gravestones and other Stonework

Many of the older gravestones have Lichens, and other stonework has Lichens, Ferns (including Hart's-tongue) and Liverworts, but no surveys have yet been carried out for these groups. Some stones (or at least their inscriptions) have been 'cleaned' to remove these potentially important flora, though it is possible that lichens may help preserve stonework by protecting it from acid rain. One 'Harmer terracotta plaque[5]' has now been found, on a grave-stone leaning against a tree near the church; according to records on the internet, there is another Harmer plaque somewhere in the churchyard.

Remembrance Garden

In ecological terms, this small area is comprised of gravel and stonework, and readily becomes colonised by Grassland, Ephemeral Perennial and Tall Ruderal species (in this location, generally considered as 'weeds'). Some species found here do not appear anywhere

[4] Alison Wright: Ancient Tree Hunt Verifier

[5] Jonathan Harmer junior (1762-1849) was the son of a stonemason and bricklayer of Heathfield. His speciality was terracotta, made from clay thought to have been dug in Heathfield Park. In addition to conventional architectural ornament, this work included reliefs for tombstones, which are found in various East Sussex churchyards, including Framfield.

else in the churchyard, for example Field Horsetail; this rather invasive species may have been inadvertently brought in with the gravel.

Compost Bin

The main ecological significance of the compost bin is its importance for protected fauna (see below).

Protected and Other Important Animals

Our mandate from God to care for his creation requires us to avoid harm to any animals as far as practicable. However some species are also protected by UK and European law; some protected species known to occur in the churchyard are Reptiles (Slow Worms and possibly other species – see below), Bats, and Birds during their nesting season. As such it is an offence to harm these species, or their places of shelter, 'intentionally or recklessly'.

Reptiles

Two reptile refuges (0.5 metre squares of roofing felt) placed along the southern boundary near the compost bin are regularly occupied by one or two Slow Worms throughout spring and summer. This species is also often observed among the gravestones. Sadly, Slow Worms are occasionally inadvertently killed during the mowing process, an issue which the Management Plan would seek to address. Potential habitat for Slow Worms and other reptiles (such as Viviparous Lizard and Grass Snake) covers most of the churchyard except grass which is regularly closely-mown, near to the church.

Optimum habitat for Slow Worms includes rough grass in the vicinity of hedges and shrubs, with more open areas for basking, and suitable hibernation sites such as compost heaps, piles of logs and unfortunately bonfire sites if material is left in place too long before being burnt. No comprehensive survey of the distribution and abundance of reptiles in the churchyard has yet been carried out, but is planned for 2011.

SxBRC have a record for Grass Snake (a harmless species) in Willow Rise (1997) immediately to the east of the churchyard. This increases the likelihood that this species could also be present in the churchyard.

There are no records of Adders occurring in the churchyard; their preferred habitat is heathland, edges of undisturbed woodland, bracken banks, gorse and scrub, and they tend to avoid anywhere regularly used by people. The likelihood of them being present in the churchyard is therefore extremely low.

Birds

The well-structured old hedges and more mature trees and shrubs are likely to be used by a variety of nesting birds. Five bird boxes and a roosting pouch have now been installed in various locations around the churchyard. Some have been occupied, including one which has been raided (and the hole enlarged) by a predator. As yet, no systematic monitoring of use for nesting has been carried out.

The churchyard habitats are also likely to provide an important food source for birds, including berries, seeds, insects and other invertebrates, and small mammals.

Bats

Bats (probably Pipistrelle species) are known to roost in the roof of the church building, and are often found in the church itself. SxBRC have records for at least 6 species within 1.5km of the church (Pipistrelles listed include an aggregated record and may include more than one species). These data include two records for the church building, from 1992 and 2004, of 10

and 6 individual Pipistrelles respectively, both recorded during building inspections. No comprehensive survey is known to have been carried out more recently for this group. The churchyard, including its hedges and trees, is likely to form part of the foraging area of these bats, which feed largely on flying insects, many of which in turn feed on the plants present.

Invertebrates

Again, no detailed survey has been carried out for this extremely diverse group, but casual observations confirm the presence of a variety of butterflies and moths, bees, hoverflies, grasshoppers and crickets, beetles including ladybirds, spiders, crustacea and molluscs. These all form a vital food resource for the birds, mammals and reptiles inhabiting the churchyard.

Maintenance Resources

Equipment

It is understood that this includes a Briggs and Stratton self-propelled 'snapper' (rotary mower), and a Hayter tractor (also rotary) mower. These are best for maintaining short grass, but the limitations of rotary mowers are that they cut the grass up into fine mulch which is difficult to rake up, and they struggle with grass that has not been cut for more than four weeks. The ideal for conservation grassland would be a reciprocating mower (we have now had an offer of one reciprocating mower on occasional loan from another church), which is more suitable for long grass in large areas. However, it is unsuitable for awkward areas around gravestones where a strimmer may be more useful (using a head with 2 or 4 nylon lines) operated by suitably experienced personnel to avoid damage to gravestones and trees. (This approach, using a strimmer, would however require a sufficient, regular, labour force.)

Labour

A large proportion of the work is currently undertaken by a very small number of people. Involving more of the community, both church goers and non-church goers for whom the churchyard is an important place, and who value wildlife, would clearly make sense for many reasons. Their involvement would benefit both the church and the wider community in a variety of ways, not least our mission to share God's love with the community. At present, there is a slight risk that work carried out by volunteers coming alone and deciding what is required could occasionally lead to inconsistency in the management regime. Having a clear Management Plan showing what needs doing when would overcome this and make the best use of all volunteers.

Financial Resources

Detail to be completed, but expenditure is likely to be less than at present.

3 Proposals for Management of Wildlife

At this stage, the Draft Management Plan focuses on management for wildlife. It would be appropriate for people with more knowledge of, and interest in, the other functions of the churchyard to prepare parallel input to the Plan for these topics.

Communication

Communicating the purpose, aims and activities of the Management Plan to the church and community is clearly vital to its successful implementation. The following are proposed:

Interpretation Boards

Ideally there should be two identical interpretation boards, one each end of the main 'Conservation Area', placed beside footpaths. (It may also be necessary to mark the boundaries of these areas with low posts and ropes.)

The design, size, content and cost which are appropriate for interpretation boards vary enormously, depending on their purpose. Factors to consider include the setting, functions and scale of the feature interpreted, the durability required, the number and age of people needing to read the boards, and the funds available. In the context of Framfield churchyard, fairly simple, low-key boards are proposed in the first instance.

A simple interpretation board (similar to the example photographed at a Sussex Wildlife Trust reserve, below) would require:

- a 1-metre wooden post (SWT use oak, but say that chestnut is cheaper and lasts almost as long);
- a sheet of marine ply, slightly bigger than A3 (alternatively the size of 3 sheets of A4 in a row, as below) attached to the wooden post at an angle such that children and adults can read it;
- the 'content' (words and pictures), printed on good quality paper, then laminated (adding a large margin round the paper);
- the laminated sheet stapled to the board through the margin, avoiding the Content sheet so that rain does not penetrate it.

Since the interpretation boards would be on the High Diversity Grassland, which would be the least frequently mown area, any interference with the mowing regime would be minimal, and if necessary the area around them could be strimmed.

(At the time of writing, the possible need for a 'Faculty' from the Diocese is being explored.)

Parish Magazine

Once agreed by the PCC, the Draft Management Plan could be introduced to the community through an article in the Parish Magazine, which has already raised some awareness in the community of the wildlife value of the churchyard. (An article was published in the January edition)

The magazine would also be an appropriate means of publicising dates of 'work parties' (see below).

Introductory Presentation

This would be open to the whole church and community of Framfield, Blackboys and Palehouse Common and would probably comprise a powerpoint presentation summarising this Management Plan, inviting volunteers to get involved in various aspects of its development and implementation, and answering any queries.

(This presentation was carried out on 26th February; the overall response to the Plan has been very positive. Specific concerns raised by the few people with reservations have been taken on board and made the subject of further investigation. Solutions have now been found to most of these, and for issues where no solution has yet been found the Plan has been amended to reduce the extent of change from the current regime. From among those who attended the meeting on 26th Feb and those who couldn't attend but wished to be signed up, we now have a pool of about 10 people willing to help regularly, either with the Work Parties or the regular amenity mowing, or both. The first Work Party is programmed for 26th March.)

Website

This Management Plan, together with other update material as below, could go in the 'Churchyard' section of the Framfield Church website. (A draft Plan has now been on the church website since December, with a box for feedback.)

Monthly 'What's On in the Churchyard?'

A monthly sheet, placed in the church porch, could summarise:

a) what is happening in wildlife terms each month
b) a brief outline of the tasks to be undertaken by volunteers that month
c) contacts for people giving more detail of work required, its exact locations, machinery, etc.
d) any churchyard events such as workforce picnics, churchyard tours, butterfly, bird and plant walks, quizzes, art days etc

Management Regime for each Zone

The zones indicated in Figure 1 have been identified based on:

- the locations of current burial areas
- the results of the Plant Survey and other current knowledge of wildlife, including the legally protected Slow Worms
- the age of gravestones in each zone, and apparent frequency of visits by relatives/friends
- the spacing of gravestones and hence the ease of mowing access
- the access requirements of visitors and walkers
- proximity to the church building

The exact boundaries for these zones, and the detail of management within them, are still under discussion and open to feedback. (This updated version of the Plan incorporates concerns regarding ease of mowing in long grass areas where stonework is closely spaced; this is reflected in the updated Figure 1.) The following management regimes are proposed for the zones identified:

A Amenity Grassland (~ 55% area; possibly reducing slightly over time)

These areas include the existing network of grass paths throughout the churchyard, as well as those areas shown (uncoloured) as Amenity Grassland on Figure 1. These

should be cut with a rotary mower to 2" every 1-2 weeks thoughout the growing season, or less as necessary to maintain a neat and tidy appearance. (If they become longer, extra care should be taken to check for Slow Worms prior to mowing.)

It would be important to maintain a very distinct boundary between these and adjacent Conservation Grassland areas, to give a clear indication that conservation areas are being deliberately left for that purpose.

B **Medium Diversity Conservation Grassland** (~10%; possibly developing into High Diversity over time)

These four areas, shown with small dots on Figure 1, lie between areas of High Diversity Grassland and Amenity Grassland. Their mowing frequency is intermediate between the two. In time, as their wildlife value increases, it may become appropriate to incorporate them into the High Diversity Grassland. They should be cut to 4" every 4 weeks from March to end of May, then left till end of September, after which they should be cut and the grass cuttings shaken up to release seeds, then raked off and added to either the compost bin or grass cuttings pile. Where practicable the rotary mower should be used, otherwise a reciprocating mower should be obtained (borrowed, bought, hired?).

C **High Diversity Conservation Grassland** (~25%)

Some High Diversity Grasslands can be categorised as either Spring-flowering or Summer-flowering Grassland, depending on their plant species composition. The results of the Plant Survey indicate Framfield churchyard grassland is a mixture, with perhaps slightly more Summer-flowering species. Also, Spring-flowering species tend to be closer to the boundaries.

It is therefore recommended that this zone be managed more or less as Summer Meadow, and should be cut once in March to 4-5", then again if necessary at the end of July but avoiding any plants still in flower, then finally in late September. After this cut the cuttings should be shaken up to release seeds, and then raked off as above. Either a reciprocating mower would be used, or strimmers operated by suitably experienced personnel. If this management is found to hamper access to frequently visited graves, more closely-mown paths through this zone may be required; this should not detract from the overall conservation management.

(After further consultation with current maintenance personnel, it has been agreed that areas of closely-spaced stonework within the High Diversity zone will continue to be cut short enough to see the stonework, as at present.)

D **Boundary Buffer Zone** (~5%)

Around all the churchyard boundaries as far as possible, including existing and pre-existing hedges and the eastern fence, a Buffer Zone should be maintained, for the following reasons:

- Slow Worms are known to use the southern boundary, and may well occupy others;
- many spring flowers occur in this zone;
- these areas of longer vegetation, especially at the base of existing hedges, are very valuable for invertebrate life

This zone should be managed more or less as Spring Meadow, but until detailed Slow Worm survey has been carried out, treat it all as Slow Worm habitat, cutting no lower than 5", in mid-June and October only.

(The width of the Buffer Zone should ideally be at least 2 metres, though this would be impracticable along the southern boundary former hedge, where paths and gravestones come closer to the boundary. However, mowing around the seat here does not need to go behind it into the hedge.)

E Specimen Trees

The Tree Survey prepared by Alison Wright in 2001 is provided at Appendix III.

Management of Important Fauna

Slow Worms
Birds
Bats
Invertebrates

(To be written on completion of further detailed surveys 2011)

Summary of Tasks for each Month

Figure 2 gives a summary of tasks for each month in each management zone; this is provided as a starting point for consideration by the PCC (now agreed), and would probably need to be flexible in accordance with progress of the seasons each year. Once agreed this Schedule could be placed in the equipment shed, so that it could be checked prior to carrying out any work in the churchyard. Variations from the schedule should be agreed with the person with overall responsibility (F Pratt).

Equipment

It is understood that both mowers currently owned by the church are rotary mowers, best suited to cutting short grass. This could put a constraint on moving towards conservation management, and it is recommended that use of a reciprocating mower and/or strimmers (especially for small areas around gravestones), both by suitably experienced personnel, should be explored.

The options for a reciprocating mower would be purchase (very expensive if new), hiring (slightly expensive compared to use of our own rotary mowers) or borrowing. Strimming would be an alternative - slower, but with a work party of experienced users three times a year, practicable if there are enough volunteers.

(We now have a kind offer of a reciprocating mower, on occasional loan from a nearby church).

Raking off grass cutting is vital on conservation grassland, and requires little or no experience, so would be an ideal task for any volunteers.

Community Involvement

Some ways of engaging the initial interest of the community have been addressed above under ‘Communication’. Maintaining their interest could be achieved through:

- work parties, as indicated in the Summary of Tasks, could be followed by a Workers’ Picnic, perhaps on a bring-and-share basis (or with culinary contributions from church members/the social committee)

- other events to celebrate Churchyard Wildlife, such as Bat, Bird, Butterfly, Plant walks at appropriate times of year
- childrens' quizzes, covering history as well as wildlife
- Art Days
- Delegation of different aspects to enthusiasts, e.g. use of the bird boxes needs monitoring by local people who walk through the churchyard regularly
- A blog?

4 Funding

(to be completed)

It is not anticipated that there would be any increase in fuel costs resulting from implementation of this Plan, since overall the amount of mowing is likely to be substantially reduced.

The cost of the interpretation boards could be covered by the £30 donation from the Framfield and Blackboys Wives Group following their recent tour of the churchyard (the need for these is currently under review, given the need for a Faculty from the Diocese).

If for any reason there is insufficient labour to manage longer grass by strimming, or we are unable to obtain a reciprocating mower, any sources of grants would be explored.

There could be slightly increased costs for social activities associated with work parties, churchyard tours, quizes etc, but some of these could probably be on a bring-and-share basis.

Fig 1 Wildlife Resources and Management Zones

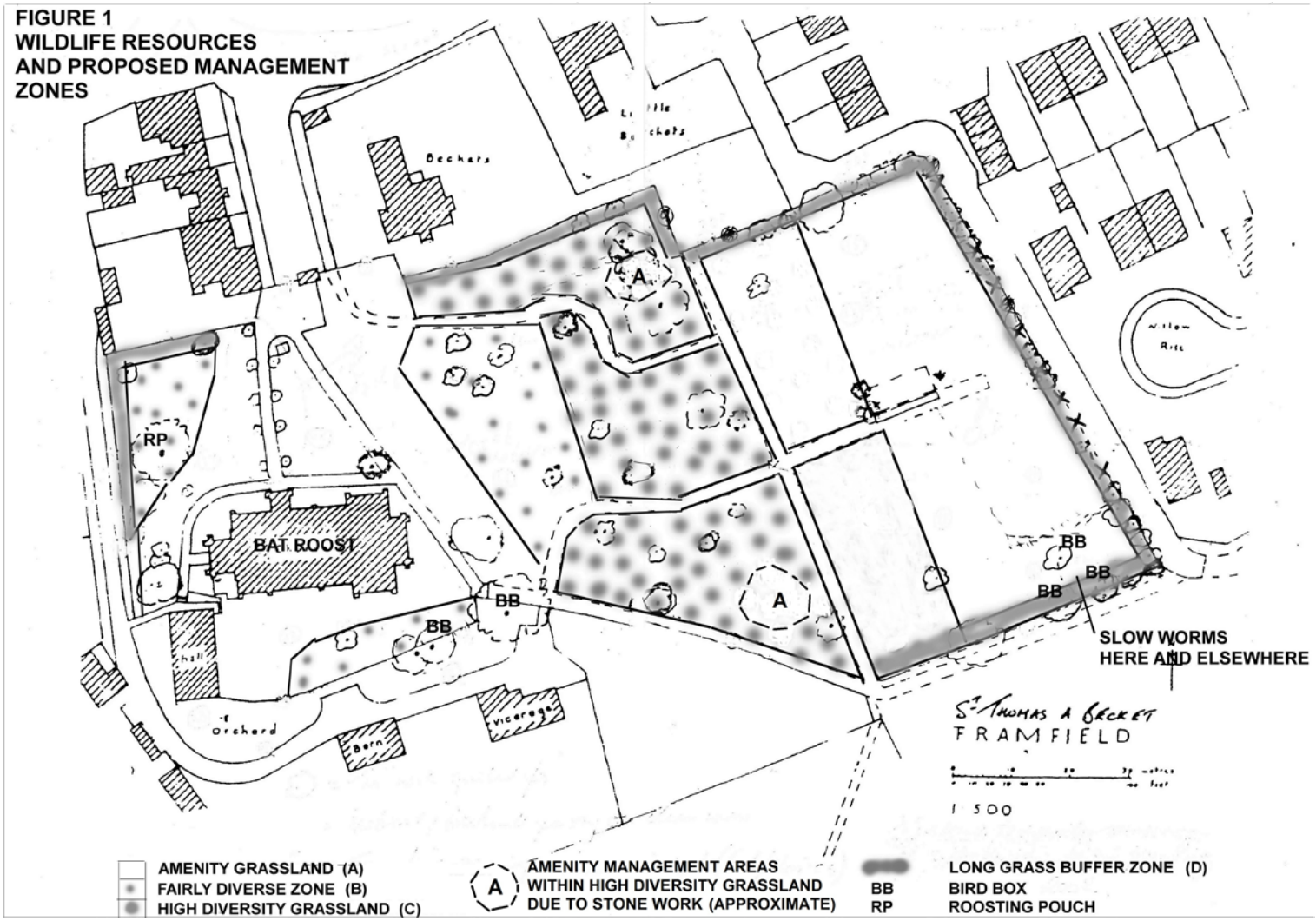

Figure 2 Summary of Tasks and Work Party Dates

Zones:	A Amenity Grassland	B Medium Diversity Grassland	C High Diversity Grassland (see text re closely-spaced stones)	D Boundary Buffer Zone	E Specimen Trees	Work Party Dates*
Mar	Rotary mower cut to 2" ~ 2-weekly or as necessary	Cut to 4" every 4 weeks: rotary mower if possible	Cut once to 4-5", rotary mower if possible, otherwise reciprocating mower or strimmer	LEAVE UNCUT		**9 April**
Apr	Rotary mower cut to 2" ~ 2-weekly or as necessary	Cut to 4" every 4 weeks as above	LEAVE UNCUT	LEAVE UNCUT		
May	Rotary mower cut to 2" ~ 2-weekly or as necessary	Cut to 4" every 4 weeks as above	LEAVE UNCUT	LEAVE UNCUT		
Jun	Rotary mower cut to 2" ~ 2-weekly or as necessary	Cut once to 4-5", avoiding any plants still in flower. Reciprocating mower	LEAVE UNCUT	Cut no lower than 5", probably with reciprocating mower.		**13, 17 June**
Jul	Rotary mower cut to 2" ~ 2-weekly or as necessary	LEAVE UNCUT	LEAVE UNCUT	LEAVE UNCUT		
Aug	Rotary mower cut to 2" ~ 2-weekly or as necessary	LEAVE UNCUT	LEAVE UNCUT	LEAVE UNCUT		
Sep	Rotary mower cut to 2" ~ 2-weekly or as necessary	Cut once to 4-5", mower as above. Shake cuttings to release seeds, then rake off & dispose of as determined.	Cut once to 4-5", mower as above. Shake cuttings to release seeds, then rake off & dispose of as determined.	LEAVE UNCUT		**17, 23 Sept**
Oct	Rotary mower cut to 2" ~ 2-weekly or as necessary	LEAVE UNCUT	LEAVE UNCUT	Cut no lower than 5", probably with reciprocating mower.		

*** if weather is unworkable on these dates the following week would be a backup date. Dates may also be changed in accordance with progression of the seasons**

Appendix I Framfield Churchyard Plant List Spring/Summer 2007

Annual Meadow Grass
Ash
Barren Brome
Barren Strawberry
Beech
Bird'sfoot Trefoil
Black Bryony
Blackthorn
Bluebell
Box
Bracken
Bramble
Bristly Ox-tongue
Broad-leaved Dock
Bugle
Bush Vetch
Cherry Laurel
Cock's-foot
Comfrey sp.
Common Cat's-ear
Common Chickweed
Common Couch
Common Forget-me-not
Common Knapweed
Common Nettle
Common Polypody
Common Sorrel
Common Sowthistle
Common Vetch
Conifers (non-native)
Cow Parsley
Creeping Bent
Creeping Buttercup
Creeping Cinquefoil
Creeping Thistle
Creeping Jenny
Curled Dock
Cut-leaved Crane's-bill
Cyclamen
Daisy
Dandelion

Dog-rose
Dog's Mercury
English Elm
Elder
False Brome
False Oat-grass
Fennel
Field Bindweed
Field Horse-tail
Field Maple
Field Sowthistle
Field Wood-rush
Garlic Mustard
Germander Speedwell
Giant Fescue
Goosegrass
Greater Knapweed
Great Willowherb
Grey Willow
Ground Ivy
Hairy Sedge
Hart's-tongue
Hawkbit sp.
Hawthorn
Hedge Bindweed
Herb Robert
Hoary Plantain
Hogweed
Holly
Honeysuckle
Italian Rye-grass
Ivy
Japanese Knotweed
Ladysmock
Lesser Celandine
Lesser Periwinkle
Lesser Stitchwort
Lesser Trefoil
(Liverworts)
Lords-and-Ladies
Meadow Buttercup
Meadow Foxtail

Meadow-grass sp.
(Mosses)
Mouse-ear sp.
Mouse-ear Hawkweed
Nipplewort
Oxeye Daisy
Pedunculate Oak
Pendulous Sedge
Perennial Rye-grass
Persian Speedwell
Petty Spurge
Prickly Sowthistle
Primrose
Privet
Ragwort
Red Clover
Red Dead-nettle
Red Fescue
Redshank
Red-veined Dock
Remote Sedge
Rhododendron
Ribwort Plantain
Rough Meadow-grass
Rosebay Willowherb
Selfheal
Sessile Oak
Shepherd's-purse
Silver Birch
Smooth Meadow-grass
Soft-brome
Soft Crane's-bill
Spear-leaved Willowherb
Spear Thistle
Speedwell sp.
Square-stalked Willowherb
Sweet Vernal-grass
Sycamore
Timothy
Tormentil
Tufted Hair-grass

Violet sp.
Wall Barley
Whitebeam
White Clover
Wild Strawberry
Willowherb sp.
Wood Avens
Wood Dock
Yarrow
Yellow Meadow Vetchling
Yew
Yorkshire Fog

Appendix II Other Churchyards Incorporating Conservation in their Management

(separate document)

Appendix III Tree Survey (Alison Wright, 2002)

(separate document)