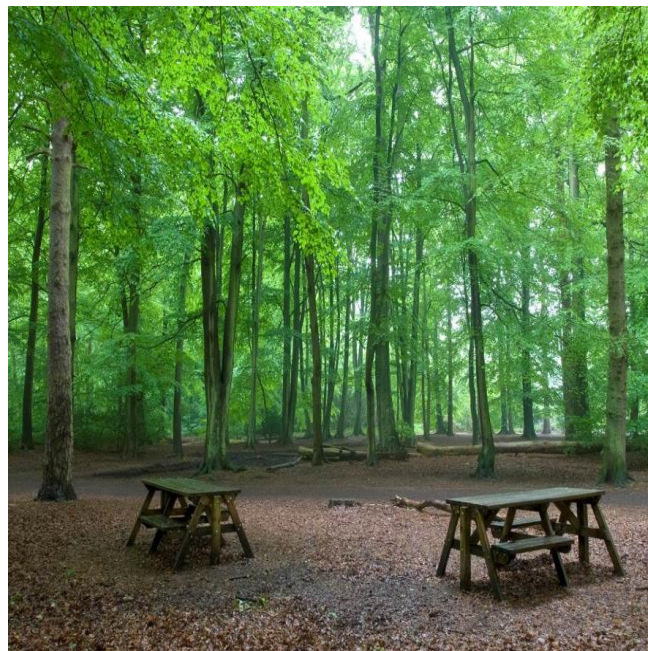




Chipperfield Common
Draft Suitable Alternative Natural
 Greenspace Management Plan
for
Chilterns Beechwoods Special Area
of Conservation Mitigation Works



Chipperfield Common, 2022

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1. Introduction

1.1 Chilterns Beechwoods Special Area of Conservation

The Chilterns Beechwoods Special Area of Conservation (CBSAC) supports the most extensive area of native beech forest in England, set within a mosaic of grassland, scrub and woodland habitats. The CBSAC is internationally recognised and within the top-tier of nature conservation sites nationally. The CBSAC includes two sites in Dacorum Borough:

- Ashridge Commons and Woods SSSI (which includes the Ashridge Estate); and
- Tring Woodlands SSSI.

The site is designated to protect the beech forest, species rich chalk grasslands and the stag beetle, which is found in decaying tree stumps and fallen timber.

Dacorum Borough Council is legally obliged to make sure that no adverse effect on the integrity of the CBSAC will arise from new development within Dacorum. As a result, the Council is preparing a Mitigation Strategy that will address the identified impacts. The strategy will comprise:

- Provision of Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANG) to attract people away from the CBSAC and therefore reduce pressure on it;
- Access management and monitoring measures on, and monitoring of the CBSAC to reduce the effect of visitors; and
- Habitat management on the SPA.

Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANG) is one of the measures contributing to the Mitigation Strategy. SANG is the term given to greenspaces that are created or enhanced with the specific purpose of absorbing recreation pressure that would otherwise occur at European wildlife sites, such as Ashridge Common and Woods SSSI. New SANGs can be created, or existing greenspaces enhanced to create a SANG, in order to absorb the level of additional recreation pressure associated with new development.

1.2 Suitable Alternative Greenspace Plans

This Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace Plan (SANG plan) deals solely with the enhancement of Chipperfield Common – an existing area of open space managed by the Council. It provides a detailed assessment of the site pre-enhancement and costed interventions needed for the site to become SANG, based on the requirements set out in the Mitigation Strategy.

1.3 Identification of Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace

The Council undertook an extensive site search, screening and assessment process to identify areas of open space as suitable alternatives to the CBSAC. This drew upon the Visitor survey, recreational impact assessment and mitigation requirements for the Chilterns Beechwoods SAC and the Dacorum Local Plan (March 2022) and Natural England guidance on creating a SANG.

From this, formal open spaces such as sports grounds, playing fields or some children's play areas (i.e. those not constructed from natural materials, such as wood) were excluded from the SANG assessment as they are unlikely to meet the criteria. Where such features are present on a considered site they are not counted towards the overall area and capacity of SANG.

This plan provides more detailed costs on how Chipperfield Common could be brought up to a suitable standard to provide an alternative to CBSAC.

1.4 Chipperfield Common as an alternative to CBSAC

Chipperfield Common is an excellent resource for informal and passive recreation. Visitors enjoy walking, horse riding, taking the dog for a walk or simply spending time in a natural environment with friends and family. Chipperfield Common is suitable as SANG as it provides numerous routes through attractive woodland in a peaceful setting where visitors can encounter points of heritage and biodiversity interest. Enhancements including new way marking and signage, works to steep and slippery sections of footpaths, and an extension to the Easy Access Route, will improve all year round accessibility of the site, while new fencing will protect its vulnerable features.

The SANGs assessment checklist is used in section 5 to demonstrate how Chipperfield Common is suitable as an alternative to CBSAC and how enhancements will enable its use as such.

1.5 Relationship with Green Flag Management Plan 2020-2025

Chipperfield Common has an existing management plan prepared to support its submission into the Green Flag Award Scheme, the accredited benchmark standard for the management of parks and open spaces across the UK. The Chipperfield Common Management Plan (Green Flag) is based around the standard's criteria set out in eight areas (a welcoming place; healthy, safe and secure; well maintained and clean; environmental management; biodiversity, landscape and heritage; community involvement; marketing and communication; and management) and was prepared with partners including Chipperfield Parish Council and the Friends of Chipperfield Common.

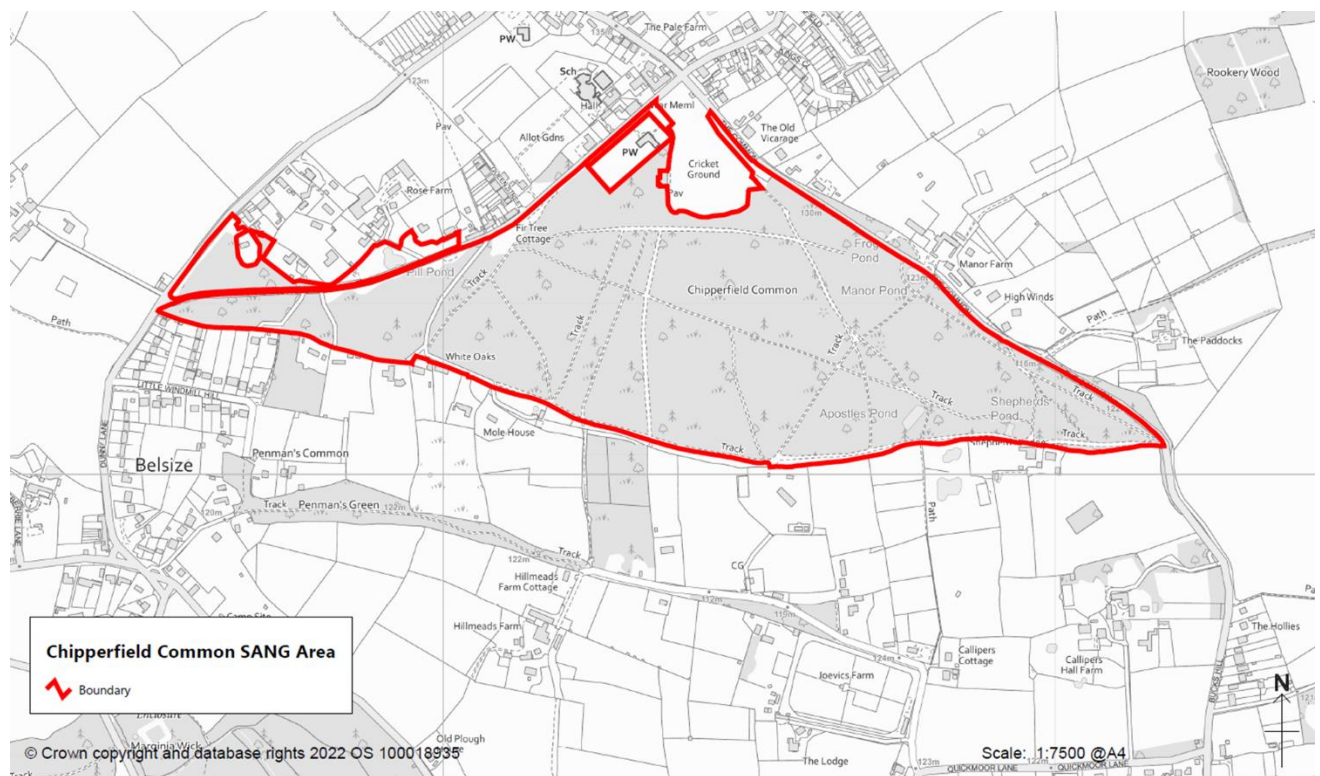
The proposed enhancement works for Chipperfield Common to become SANG are in addition to existing management activities and actions, and recognise that in order for the site to appeal to more visitors, more infrastructure and informal recreational features are needed to support the increased use of the site and to ensure any sensitive areas of biodiversity are protected. The SANG Management Plan will also will also deliver opportunities to improve visitor experience and biodiversity raised through the Green Flag management plan where funding has not been available for delivery where these are appropriate for SANG.

2. Site Management Statement

2.1 Introduction, site description and location

Chipperfield Common is situated in the village of Chipperfield on the southern boundary of the Borough of Dacorum in West Hertfordshire, approximately 5 miles north-west of Watford / south west of Hemel Hempstead. It is located on the southern edge of the village and forms a significant feature in the local landscape. The woodland's relatively low elevation disguises its size and makes it less prominent than it otherwise would be. Whilst originally open heathland, the site is now largely covered by woodland, forming the largest contiguous woodland managed by the Council.

The SANG management plan boundary is shown on map 1 and comprises an area of 40.78 hectares. It excludes areas of common land which are in uses that are incompatible as SANG – the cricket field and pavilion, war memorial and green – and focuses on the woodland areas. The OS grid reference (by the entrance to the Easy Access Route from the Cricket Club Car Park) is TL045014.



Map 1: SANG boundary map Chipperfield Common

The Common consists predominantly of secondary woodland that has gradually regenerated as traditional grazing practices have ceased. The age of the woodland varies across the site from approximately 40 to 200 years old. The Common contains a number of significant historical landscape features including five ponds, eight veteran sweet chestnuts estimated to date back to the 1600's and two early bronze age burial mounds.

Chipperfield Common is well used for informal recreation, dog walking and horse riding.

2.2 Adjoining uses

The Common (road) runs along its north flank and the site is also visible from Windmill Hill that runs directly through the Common's western end, and from Bucks Hill to the east. To the

south, the Common adjoins open farmland with scattered individual houses, many of which are accessed via lanes that run through the Common. The Common is located within the centre of the village, close to pubs, amenities and local cafés.

2.3 Accessibility

The site is accessible on foot from several directions and six car parks provide parking for visitors travelling to the site by car. Of the six car parks at Chipperfield Common the largest, Cricket Ground Car Park, has a stone surface, the Windmill, Blackwells and Church Car Parks, have tarmac surfaces. There are two further small car parks, The Common and Pill Pond Car Parks with stone surfaces. The car parks are bordered by low level wooden fences or posts where measures are needed to protect the Common from parking encroachment. In 2020 the Trees & Woodlands team successfully bid for funding to relay the car parks hard surfaces with works to be implemented in 2022-24. The total capacity of the car parks is currently approximately 100 cars.

The Common is open access within Dacorum Borough. On the southern boundary with Three Rivers District Council area there are gates marking the exit of two public footpaths leading from Sarratt into the Common and Dacorum Borough. To the south east a bridleway in Three Rivers District links to the permissive bridleway around the Common.

2.4 Topography

Chipperfield Common has a mainly level terrain with the site elevation ranging between 125 and 130 metres above sea level. The exception is to the far west of the site, where the land dips down steeply to meet Windmill Hill near the junction of Dunny Lane, and back through the Dunny Lane compartment up to Windmill Hill to join the main section of the Common by FP3.

2.5 Legal / designations

Chipperfield Common is within the Chipperfield Conservation Area and the Green Belt. The site is registered as a Common under the Commons Register with no Commoners rights.

The Common is designated as a Local Wildlife Site comprising secondary broadleaved woodland on former acid heath.

The two burial mounds within the site are Scheduled Monuments and protected under the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979.

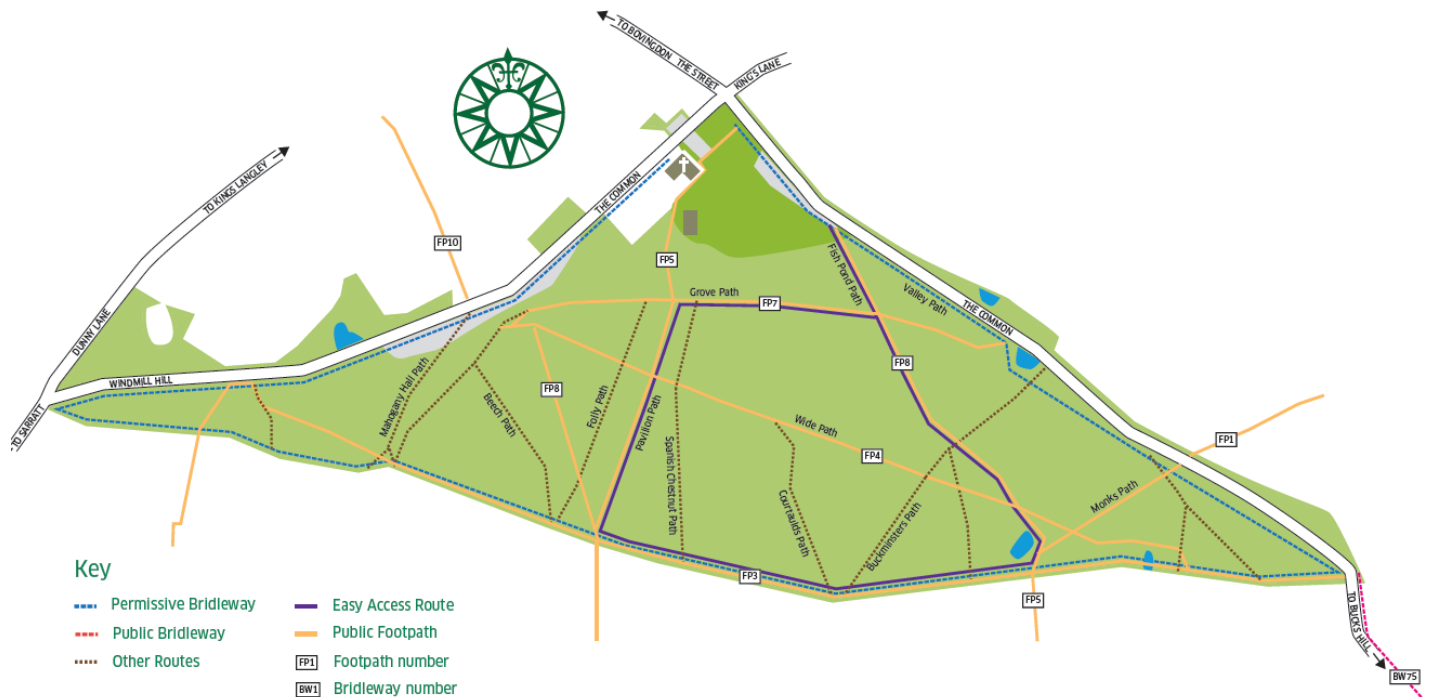
Chipperfield Common is in the Freehold ownership of Dacorum Borough Council. The Common was gifted to Hemel Hempstead Rural District Council, for a fee of 10 shillings, in 1936 “for the use or purpose of a public open space”. A covenant attached to the sale of the Common states “Consult local feeling as to the management of the Common where reasonable”.

The Council’s Byelaws for Pleasure Grounds, Public Walks and Open Spaces apply to Chipperfield Common and can be found on the Council’s website at

https://www.dacorum.gov.uk/docs/default-source/leisure-culture/byelaws-for-pleasure-grounds-public-walks-and-open-spaces.pdf?sfvrsn=4636009e_4.

2.6 Recreational routes

Chipperfield Common plays an important role in providing countryside access opportunities to walkers and horse riders.



Map 2: Access routes with Chipperfield Common

Map 2 shows the location of the Easy Access Route (EAR), a circular route of wider paths with a firm and level surface. Chipperfield Common has been classified as an Urban Fringe and Managed Landscapes as defined by the Countryside for All Charter. The circular EAR of 1 mile through the woodland was developed in the spring of 2007, as part of Hertfordshire County Council's Rights of Way Policy to provide a minimum of one route in each district. The route through the Common was the first to be developed in Dacorum. The intention of the EAR was to provide the opportunity of access for all without detracting from the semi natural environment enjoyed by visitors to Chipperfield Common.

The Easy Access Route is narrow in places due to overgrown vegetation. A spur from the Easy Access Route provides a surfaced route to one of the veteran sweet chestnut trees. This does not continue to re-join the main Easy Access Route, requiring visitors who need a surfaced route to double back to the point where they entered.

The Common contains multiple (Public) Rights of Way that cross the Common in both north-south and east-west directions. Six further undesignated paths add more links between the rights of way and key features such as veteran sweet chestnuts. Many other unrecorded and narrower informal routes exist that meander through the woodland. These change over time as vegetation growth and fallen timber block routes.

A permissive bridleway around much of the boundary of the Common provides links to surrounding areas and a pleasant environment for the significant horse riding interest in Chipperfield and nearby villages.

The Easy Access Route along part of the southern boundary also forms part of the permissive bridleway, with the potential to cause a conflict of use if a large party of horse

riders pass through. Horse riders sometimes use the area along the edge of the surfaced path preferring the softer ground. This extends the width and degrades the surfacing of the easy access route. A pinch point along the bridleway brings all users into the same point causing further conflict and damage.

In addition there are exposed roots on the two footpath links that cross the compartment between Windmill Hill and Dunny Lane. These routes also become slippery and muddy over the winter period, plus there are exposed raised manhole covers that could form a trip hazard.

There is a steep section of path leading towards this compartment from the main part of the Common (down towards Windmill Hill near to the Dunny Lane junction) that is without warning signage to visitors that it may be difficult to access.

Various routes pass close to important features of the Common. While these form destination points for visitors, tramping around the area of the veteran sweet chestnuts can cause compaction above the roots plus footpaths near to the trees can encourage visitors to climb onto branches risking damage to these irreplaceable specimens. Walking routes near to or over the burial mounds can cause degradation to the scheduled monuments.

2.7 Site signage, interpretation and information

The Common is not signed from the main roads or surrounding areas.

There is an interpretive board containing a map, routes and information about the Common in Cricket Ground Car Park. Further signs within the wood mark the public footpaths. There is another interpretive sign adjacent to one of the burial mounds explaining its history and significance.

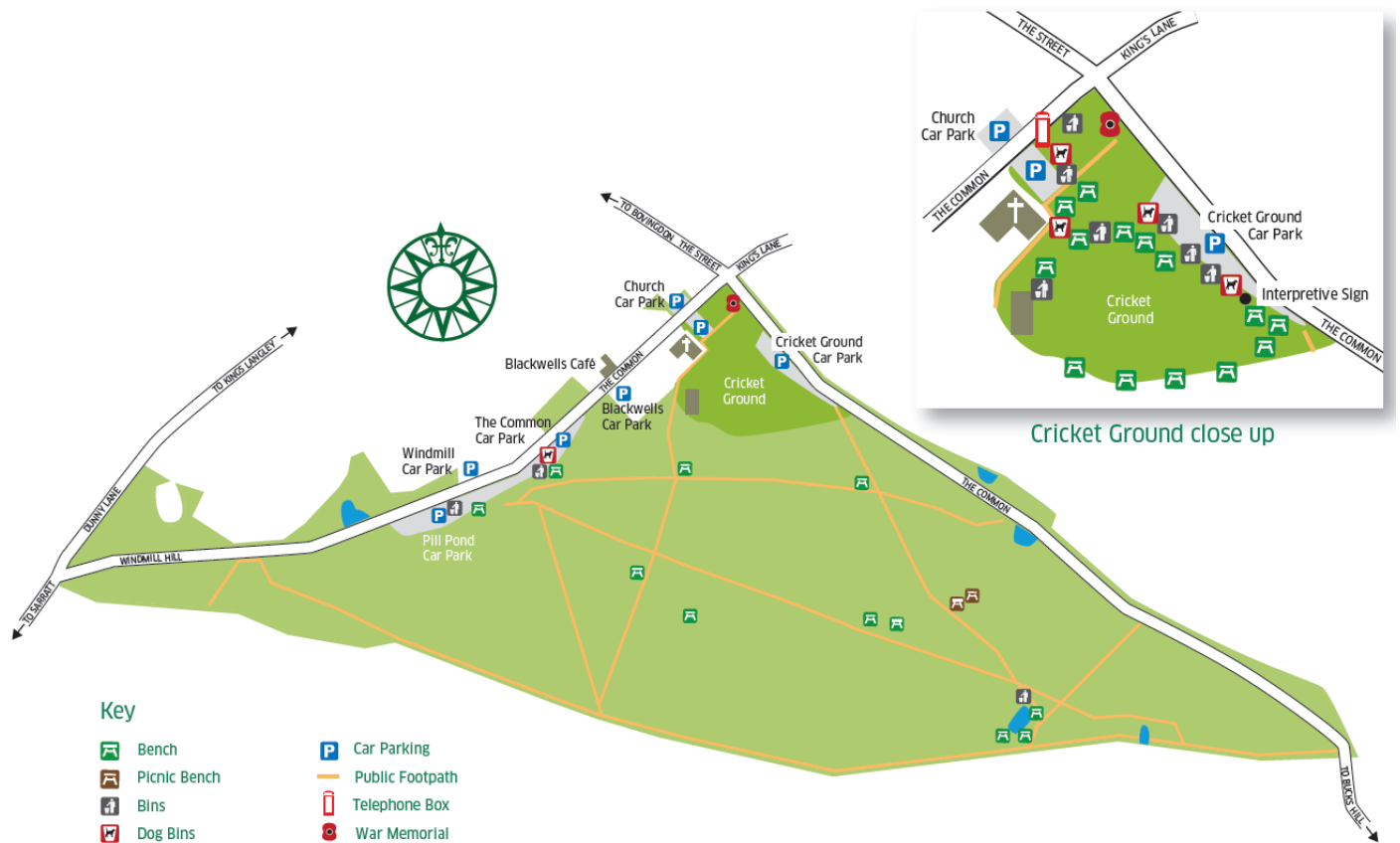
The monthly parish magazine Chipperfield News is the main publication used to inform residents of developments at Chipperfield Common and to generate interest and involvement in the site. Chipperfield News is distributed to each household within the village and is available at the local post office, Blackwells Cafe and pubs.

The Parish Council contributes to the Chipperfield Village website which includes a section dedicated to the Common. The Common is also mentioned in various Hertfordshire websites.

2.8 Site furniture

There are 9 litter bins (adapted to a specific fox proof design), 6 dog waste bins and 2 easy access picnic benches at Chipperfield Common, which are identified on Map 3. Scattered throughout the site are multiple benches, including several memorial benches.

Map 3 displays non-natural site features.



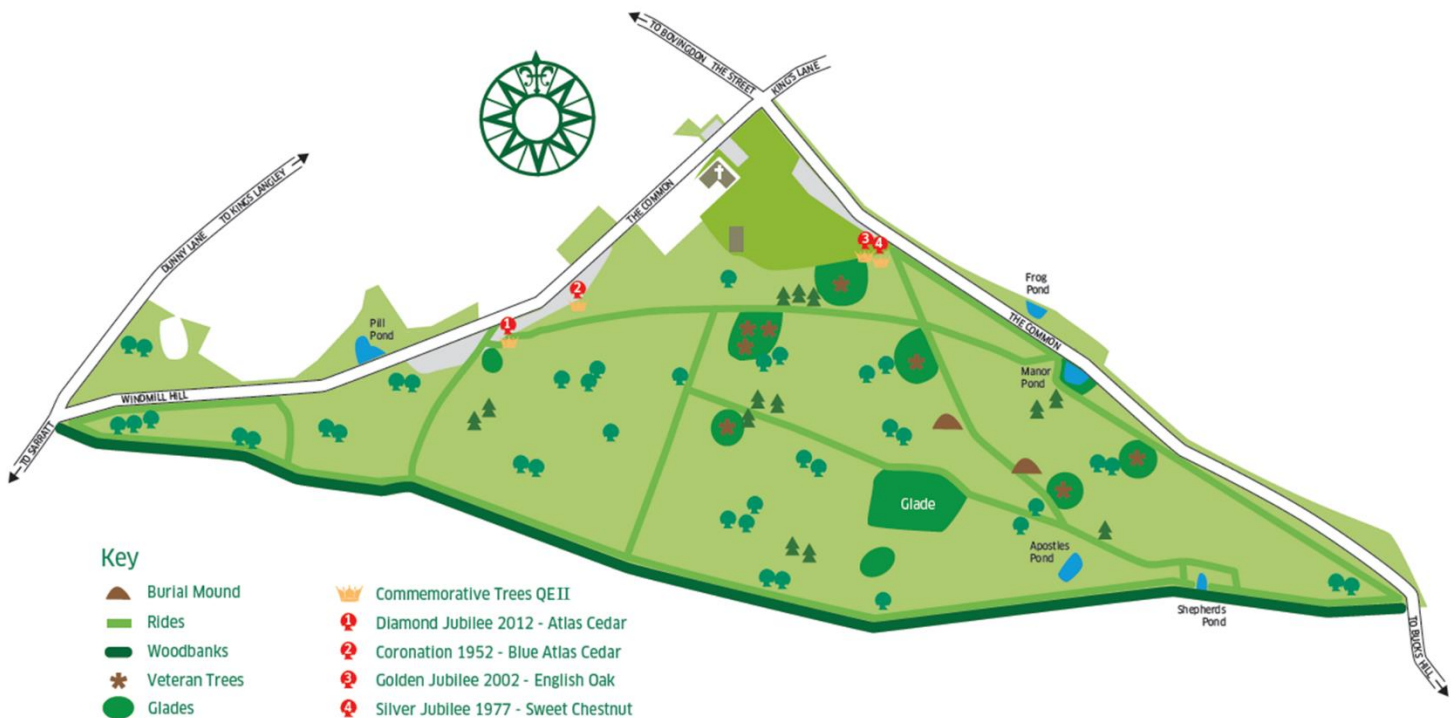
Map 3: Non-natural site features within Chipperfield Common

2.9 Biodiversity, Landscape and Heritage

Habitat Description

Chipperfield Common comprises mainly of secondary Semi Natural Woodland at different stages of development with small areas of heath on the fringes of the woodland and within a few woodland glades. There are five ponds at Chipperfield Common within the woodland and eight veteran sweet chestnut trees.

Map 4 displays natural site features.



Map 4: Natural site features within Chipperfield Common

Semi-Natural Woodland

- The woodland has a varied character that changes distinctly from east to west. Approximately two thirds of the woodland consists primarily of mature oak and beech woodland with significant stands of introduced Scots pine and established thickets of holly.
- The oak trees are likely to have arisen from old coppice stools and grazed seedlings and estimations of their age vary from between 80 and 200 years.
- The beech trees are estimated to be around 140 years old and the Scots pine 80 to 100 years.
- The western section of the Common is developing birch woodland that has arisen as a result of natural regeneration.

Veteran, Commemorative and Memorial Trees

- The eight veteran sweet chestnut trees are scattered within the wooded area of the Common and have been dated to between 1600 and 1620.
- There are two veteran limes around Apostles Pond that remain out of the 12 originally planted to mark the Apostles (the other lime trees around the pond are later replacements).
- Commemorative trees mark Queen Elizabeth II's coronation, Silver Jubilee and Diamond Jubilee.

Lowland Heath and Open Ground

- Pockets of lowland heath remain from when the majority of Chipperfield Common was grazing land.
- A large opening was created by a storm in 1990 and planted with heather seed.
- Further glades have been created around each veteran sweet chestnut, around each pond where this has been possible, and there are two further glades in the woodland.

Boundaries

- The traditional ditch and bank boundary is intact along most of the southern boundary.
- A number of beech, oak, ash and hornbeam are established on top of the bank and all pre-date the current woodland.

Ponds

- There are five, long established ponds - Apostles, Shepherds, and Manor Ponds being located within the main woodland.
- The locally named Frog Pond is next to the Manor House on the north side of The Common (road).
- Pill Pond is situated to the north of Windmill Hill, adjacent to the road, and is seasonal due to an inconsistent water supply.

2.10 Landscape

Chipperfield Common offers woodland walks on a level terrain, with the focus being on features within the site rather than exterior views. There are glimpses of views of open farmland from the footpath along the southern boundary. Key features such as the sweet chestnuts, barrows and ponds are revealed as visitors' journey through the Common.

2.11 Biodiversity

In September 2019, the Borough Council engaged the services of an environmental consultancy to complete an Extended Phase One Habitat Assessment of Chipperfield Common.

The assessment found that overall the habitats within the site are considered to be of high ecological value, comprising mainly broadleaved and mixed woodland, which provides habitat for a number of species, particularly small mammals and nesting birds. Current management has allowed for standing dead wood to persist in areas where they are not considered to pose a health and safety risk, to provide optimal habitat for a number of invertebrate species.

The Phase One report's key recommendations were;

- Woodland glade restoration to re-establish open grassland habitat and reduce scrub encroachment.
- Structural management of woodland and rides to increase shrub and ground field layer diversity.
- Pond management of aquatic vegetation and invasive species, pruning of nearby trees to allow greater light penetration, and limiting dog use to a single pond across the entire site.
- Woodland management to support wildlife including the introduction of additional bat boxes and the creation log piles to encourage invertebrates.

It was noted that there was good potential for reptiles including great crested newts, bats, birds, badgers, other mammals, and invertebrates.

The Dacorum Borough Nature Conservation Strategy – a Local Biodiversity Action Plan (2001) listed species that may be found in or close to Chipperfield Common include, Great Crested Newt, Tree Sparrow, Bullfinch, Song Thrush, Barn Owl, Pipistrelle & Natterers Bat and Dormouse.

2.12 Heritage

As part of the Manor of Kings Langley, Chipperfield Common was in royal ownership from 1066.

When Edward II built the Kings Langley Priory for the Dominican Black Friars he gave them land close to the Palace in Kings Langley. In 1316, he granted the Manor House of Langley including Chipperfield to the Dominican Brotherhood. There is a strong tradition that Apostles Pond was a monastic fish pond belonging to the Dominican Priory as Edward II gave the friars permission to coppice wood and take fish from the pond. This practice continued until the 16th century. It is believed that John and Mary Marriott planted 12 lime trees around the pond in 1714 and because of this, the pond is known as the “Apostles Pond”. Most of what must have been secondary limes planting at Apostles Pond have now given way to age and decay and there are now a mix of 13 old and young limes. The Marriotts also planted oak, beech and pine on the Common in groups of five.

In 1630, Chipperfield Common was sold to the City of London to pay the debts of King Charles I. The Manor was conveyed to Thomas Houker of Middle Temple and stayed in private ownership until 1936, when the Blackwell family gifted the Common to Hemel Rural District Council.

The original woodland was cleared for grazing centuries ago, creating an open heathland with relatively few scattered trees. A census taken in 1608 established that there were only 512 trees on the Common at that time. With the cessation of grazing in 1930, trees have naturally regenerated to the secondary woodland seen today.

The two round burial mounds within the woodland probably date from the early Bronze Age (c.2300-c.1400BC). These burial grounds usually contain the ashes of a single cremation often in a pottery vessel and sometimes accompanied by objects intended for use in the next world. Ditches originally surrounded the barrows but these have been filled in over time, mainly with earth eroded from the mounds.

2.13 Management/maintenance

Dacorum Borough Council (DBC) manages the site in partnership with Chipperfield Parish Council (CPC). Chipperfield Common is managed by the Trees and Woodland section of the Clean, Safe & Green team of the Council. Clean, Safe & Green is a division of Environmental Services.



Figure 1: Operational structure, Clean Safe and Green

The Parish Council provides a Woodland Ranger and a Village Warden on a part time basis. The 'Friends of Chipperfield Common' meet on a regular basis and carry out practical work such as pond clearance and glade creation. Ad hoc volunteer groups also undertake work on the Common.

2.14 Evaluation

Chipperfield Common is an important site to its local community and the village, and its' attractive woodland routes are regularly used by dog walkers, walkers and horse riders. It is of high importance to nature conservation and heritage.

Potential SANG sites are likely to have additional capacity where average visitor use is less than 1 person per ha per hour. Visitor surveys of Chipperfield Common were carried out in 2022 as part of the Chilterns Beechwoods SAC Mitigation Strategy. From this visitor surveying data, the available capacity at Chipperfield Common is in the order of 1,671 new dwellings.

An assessment of Chipperfield Common against the Council's SANG criteria can be found in table 5.1 of section 5.

2.15 Constraints and Issues

- The car parks around Chipperfield Common are shared with other village uses and cannot be secured solely for visitors to the Common.
- The barrows have scheduled monuments status, which gives the preservation of these features priority over other uses.
- Chipperfield Common's registration as common land restricts works that prevent or impede access to or over the land and controls development.

2.16 Management Objectives

The objective of this plan is to enhance Chipperfield Common as a Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace to provide an attractive alternative to visitors who may otherwise have visited the CBSAC.

3. Site Proposals for CBSAC Mitigation

The enhancement measures within this plan were identified through desk top and on-site assessments of Chipperfield Common against the SANG criteria set out in section 3.5 of the Mitigation Strategy. The detailed assessment is shown in section 5 of this plan and comprises criteria that are either expected or desirable in achieving the primary objective of providing an alternative visitor destination to draw potential users away from the CBSAC.

As a result, the proposed works are in addition to, or bring forward, existing management actions identified through the Chipperfield Common (Green Flag) management plan. The interventions to this site for it to become SANG aim to replicate features which have been found to draw visitors to the CBSAC and improve access, alongside the enhancement of the site's natural qualities.

These interventions are described below and listed in a costed summary in section 6. The works are also shown on an annotated site map (section 4). The proposed works are as follows.

3.1 Paths

- New interpretation signs at key car parks to welcome visitors and provide information on footpath routes and the history of Chipperfield Common.
- Resurfacing of the Easy Access Route to improve accessibility.
- Additional surfaced link from the Spanish Chestnut Path back to the Easy Access Route, to continue the circular route without need to double back from the destination point.
- Two new surfaced links added to FP7 and the Easy Access Route – one from the Church car park and another from The Common (road west) by the churchyard and Blackwell's café area.
- Improvements to the areas around the sweet chestnuts along the Easy Access Route to enhance these as destination points and to protect the veteran trees, to include:- surfacing around the trees; propping vulnerable limbs; installing fences to restrict access; adding benches and information boards.
- Further tree surveying and necessary works for safety along routes where improvements to waymarking are planned.
- Access improvements in areas of steep and slippery terrain to the far west of the site around the junction of Windmill Hill and Dunny Lane.
- Barrows protected with further measures and new or renewed interpretation signage added.

3.2 Parking

- Resurfacing of remaining car parks to aid year round use.

3.3 Access

- Repurpose eastern section of Cricket Ground Car Park after bollards into new visitor arrival area with new interpretation and wayfinding signage, and an extended EAR to the car park and cycle parking.
- New or replacement finger or waymarking posts added throughout site at key footpath intersections and points along routes.
- Range of routes of different lengths and difficulties identified on the site plan and waymarked, including naming of routes and paths to aid orientation.
- New benches and bins added throughout site.

- Surfacing extended from the EAR to the easy access picnic benches to aid use.

3.4 Character of Space

- Works to ponds to follow an assessment of their condition and ecology by Herts & Middlesex Wildlife Trust, in consultation with Chipperfield Parish Council.
- Removal of fencing in compartment between Windmill Hill and Dunny Lane to provide open access, thinning operations by FoCC and approved contractor.
- Glade management to control regrowth of birch, bracken and scrub.
- Vegetation clearance works around Apostles Pond to ensure the continuity of the Lime 'Apostles' heritage feature.
- Pond management at Apostles Pond to be guided by further survey work.

3.5 Funding

Funding for the proposed works will come from new residential development within the Borough that is likely to have an adverse effect on the CBSAC, as set out in the Mitigation Strategy. This states that legal obligations under Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act will be entered into before a planning application is determined. A proportion of the total amount payable under this agreement will go towards SANG enhancement measures and on-going management of these measures as detailed in this SANG plan. These enhancement measures will ensure the site is suitable as an alternative to the Chilterns Beechwoods and will attract new residents away from the SAC.

3.6 Prioritising and Phasing of Works

The implementation of the proposed works will be prioritised in the following order (unless an item is unable to proceed due to other site works going on at that time or is restricted to a particular season):

1. Car park resurfacing.
2. Site information, interpretation boards, waymarking.
3. Resurfacing of EAR and completion of additional loop via Spanish Chestnut Path.
4. New steps to steep sections of footpath at far west of site.
5. Improvements to informal paths including regrading where needed.

4. Site Plan of Enhancements

Map of improvements to follow.

5. Quality – SANGs Criteria Checklist

The enhancements identified in section 3 aim to encourage more visitors to Chipperfield Common. This will be achieved by x, y and z.

Table 5.1 provides an assessment of Chipperfield Common against the SANG criteria checklist, both before and after the implementation of the enhancement measures described in section 3. The criteria are drawn from section 3.5 of the Mitigation Strategy that provides the Council's guidance on the components of SANG.

Table 5.1 Site Assessment against SANG Criteria

Category	Criteria	Expected Desirable	Before	After
Paths	A minimum circular walk of 2.3-2.5 kilometres to be provided.	Expected	Waymarked EAR of 1.8 km. No further circular routes are indicated along the network of footpaths.	Additional 1.3km of EAR routes added to path network and waymarked through the site providing visitors with a range of options to suit their needs. Annual maintenance of path network to ensure access for all.
	Paths easily used and well maintained but mostly unsurfaced.	Expected	Paths are mostly level and easily used. The EAR is the only surfaced route.	Routes mostly unsurfaced. EAR extended to provide alternative loop along Spanish Chestnut Path to provide an alternative link to shared route with bridleway. EAR also extended to provide links to Church car park, The Common (in the proximity of Blackwells cafe) and around the cemetery. EAR widened to include areas where picnic benches are provided for wheelchair users.
	Where parking is provided, circular path should start and finish at that location.	Expected	All car parks are connected to a footpath link to the Common from which a circular walk can be made. The EAR is marked from the Cricket Club car park.	EAR extended up to the entrance of the Cricket Ground car park to aid users. Car park to be extended to provide a safe visitor arrival area linking to the EAR route.

	Paths should be safe, easily identifiable and kept clear of obstructions, such as scrub cover for example.	Expected	Paths are within the woodland with short links from car parks and surrounding area without tree or scrub cover. Vegetation is encroaching on some routes.	Obstructing vegetation cleared from all marked routes in accordance with revised maintenance schedule.
	Information boards and/or signage at access points outlining the layout of the site and routes available to visitors.	Desirable	An interpretive board in the Cricket Ground Car Park contains a map and information about the Common. The number of boards is limited given the multiple car parks and entrance points. Many of the footpath interconnections are not waymarked, or existing posts are damaged or encroached by vegetation.	Five new site entrance signs with interpretive panels, plus two new internal interpretive panels within the Common. Directional signs added to waymark routes for walkers, horse riders and cyclists.
Parking	Parking to be provided on sites larger than four hectares, unless the site is solely intended for residents within 500 metres only.	Expected	The total capacity of the six car parks is approximately 100 cars. These also serve other facilities in the village including the church, cricket ground, football matches, tennis club and Blackwell's café, plus serve school pick up and provide overspill parking for the pubs.	Car parks constructed from compacted materials to be resurfaced. New edging materials provided to limit extent of parking where needed to prevent damage to the Common.
	Parking areas to be easily and safely accessible by car and to be clearly sign posted.	Expected	The car parks are along the main roads of the village and are clearly visible. There is no signage from the surrounding highway or at the car park entrances.	New 'welcome' signage to be installed at Cricket Ground and Church car park
	Visitor to be able to take dogs from the car park to the site safely off the lead	Desirable	Leads may be needed where visitors use car parks where individual car park spaces are accessed from the highway, or for	No change.

			Cricket Ground Car Park if a match is taking place.	
Access	Access points to be provided based on the intended visitors of the SANG.	Expected	Walkers have a wide choice of routes into the Common from the car parks and adjoining highway. Horse riders can access the permissive bridleway from The Common (road) and Windmill Hill, or the public bridleway in Three Rivers District.	EAR extended up to the entrance of Cricket Ground car park to aid users. Key entrances made more visible through new signage.
	Safe access route on foot from nearest car park and/or footpath.	Expected	Car parks either connect directly to a footpath link into the woodland or to amenity grassland that leads to a woodland entrance.	No change.
	Access should be unrestricted within the site, with plenty of space for dogs to exercise freely and safely off the lead.	Expected	Fencing only present on site where needed:- for safety reasons; to protect features of heritage or biodiversity importance; to enable habitat enhancement works to establish; to mark property boundaries; to protect the Common from vehicle damage.	Fencing installed at four veteran sweet chestnut locations to protect roots from compaction damage. Deer fencing removed from Dunny Lane compartment where trees are fully established. New fencing installed around barrows with interpretive panels.
Character of space	Needs to be semi-natural, or perceived as such where close to existing development.	Expected	The majority of the site is semi-natural woodland. Benches, finger and way marking posts within the woodland are timber. HCC has some non-timber signs.	Materials for new benches, signage and waymarking to be in keeping with environment.
	If the site is larger than 12 hectares, a range of habitats should be present.	Expected	Site provides a range of habitats and mostly comprises of semi-natural mixed woodland, with sections of broadleaved woodland, ponds, small glades and amenity grassland.	No change.

	No unnatural intrusions (e.g. odour from sewage treatment works, noise from busy roads).	Expected	No unpleasant intrusions.	No change.
	There should be little intrusion of built structures such as dwellings, buildings, metal boundary fencing, etc.	Expected	The individual scattered dwellings along the southern boundary walk are partially screened by vegetation along the bank. Fencing is mostly for safety reasons or to protect features.	Boundary management to address visitor safety whilst maintaining screening function.
	Naturalistic space with areas of open countryside with dense and scattered trees and shrubs.	Desirable	Woodland is the dominant feature of the site.	Woodland dominance will be reduced in selected compartments via thinning and glade management in order to provide a range of site habitats.
	Gentle undulating topography. Steep slopes are likely to deter visitors.	Desirable	The site is mostly level. At the far west of the site, around the junction of Windmill Hill and Dunny Lane there are short footpaths which are steep and may be difficult for some users.	Steeper footpaths to be resurfaced and new steps installed where appropriate to increase visitor access.
	Focal point such as a viewpoint or monument within the site.	Desirable	The veteran sweet chestnuts, ponds and barrows act as points of interest within the site.	New seating and interpretation signage at selected key features will add further interest to visitors at these destination points.
	Provision of open water, however large areas of open water cannot count towards SANG capacity.	Desirable	There are five small ponds, one of which is seasonal.	Pond management will be progressed in conjunction with the Parish Council following the assessment of an ecological report being carried out by external consultants.

6. Management, maintenance and monitoring

Alongside the delivery of the enhancements required to upgrade Chipperfield Common to SANG standard, additional management and maintenance operations are needed to maintain the site at a desirable level. This will be calculated on the basis of 80 years as set out in the Mitigation Strategy and will be applied as necessary in order to maintain the standard of the site and keep it functioning as SANG. Over time, there will be an increased need to repair and maintain the older enhancements on the site as well as potential for unexpected damage or breakages. As a result it will be necessary to alter annual expenditure of the 80 year maintenance fund to respond to the needs of the site at a particular time. Therefore expenditure may be higher in some years than in others.

Table 6.1 below describes the change and uplift in management and maintenance operations for Chipperfield Common.

Table 6.1 Management and Maintenance Operations

Compartment/habitat type	Current management and maintenance operations	Proposed management and maintenance operations for SANG
Woodland	Selective removal of trees within high forest to create gaps that allow natural regeneration to take place to improve woodland's age class structure through individual or group felling and thinning. Focus on creating and maintaining glades and connecting rides, thinning within compartments considered annually.	Increased safety focused works near pedestrian routes and site boundaries, with increased vegetation clearance works to prevent encroachment on all routes, near benches, signs/boards and car parks.
Under-story Management	Control of non-native species such as holly and laurel. Coppicing of existing underwood.	FoCC to continue clearance of holly and laurel. Additional works to be carried out by approved contractors.
Veteran Tree Management	Annual inspection of veteran trees. No work to sweet chestnuts planned within GF management plan period. Some tree removal within the surrounding glades of the live chestnuts.	Where necessary, veteran sweet chestnuts secured and stabilised by propping vulnerable limbs. Appropriate pruning to be considered using approved contractor with veteran tree management experience.

		Apostles Pond – access to veteran limes restricted due to their condition, clearance operations carried out around the pond to highlight the younger limes as a feature.
Glade Management	<p>Maintenance through tree and scrub clearance when appropriate and mowing once a year in autumn, ideally with the cuttings being removed from the site.</p> <p>Glade compartment 7 management by manual and chemical tree, scrub and bracken clearance.</p> <p>Annual mowing to Windmill Hill Glade.</p> <p>Selective felling in glades surrounding veteran sweet chestnuts.</p>	<p>Appropriate glade management to be agreed with external consultant and progressed annually via approved contractors.</p> <p>Chemical usage to be reviewed in accordance with DBC policy</p> <p>Veteran tree management to be agreed with external consultant and progressed via approved contractors.</p>
<p>Pond management</p> <p>Pill Pond Frog Pond Apostles Pond Shepherds Pond Manor Pond</p>	<p>All - annual inspection</p> <p>Annual cut and collect of surrounding grassland, management of scrub, removal of invasive species, works to maintain light levels. Management operations for individual ponds within Chipperfield Common Green Flag Management Plan.</p>	All pond management to be guided by the recommendations of a forthcoming report by Herts & Middlesex Wildlife Trust.
Young woodland planting	Inspection and thinning as appropriate, removal of tree guards.	Works to continue via FoCC and approved contractors.
Trees	Annual inspection (October) of trees adjacent to main footpaths for safety by the Tree and Woodlands Team along with a general visual inspection of trees throughout the site. Any defective tree considered a risk to the safety	Revised borough-wide woodland inspection programme. Red-zoned woodlands such as Chipperfield Common are formally inspected every two years. Formal inspections to include GPS data.

	of visitors to be made safe or removed as soon as possible.	Informal inspections throughout the year.
Ride/edge Management	Works to 4m swathe both sides of paths surrounding each management plot to include closer mowing of a 1m strip to the side of each path, flailing of the remaining 3m, and selective felling of younger trees.	To continue on all major pathways and extended EAR routes, at annual or biennial frequency.
Boundary Management	Survey of mature boundary trees to identify trees to be reduced in height. Management of holly to provide views or screen adjacent properties.	Boundary trees inspected every two years, with safety work carried out by approved contractor.
Burial Mounds	Monitoring to ensure that neither site is invaded by undesirable vegetation. Inspect fencing.	Management advice to be sought from Natural England / appropriate authority concerning use of chemicals within burial mounds sites. Appropriate vegetation management will follow with minimal access.
General		
Car Parks	Annual inspection of car parks with maintenance undertaken as needed.	Works to take place to car parks to improve surfacing.
Litter and Waste Management	Twice-weekly inspections by the Village Warden and the Common Ranger of general conditions within and around the woods, to include removal of any litter, again twice-weekly.	Further bins to be installed at major route intersections, and use monitored to determine if provision is appropriate.
Footpath Routes	Annual inspection of EAR and footpath routes with maintenance undertaken as needed.	Formal annual inspection incorporating GPS data. Informal inspections throughout the year.

Site furniture and structures	Regular inspections of facilities such as paths, benches and fencing by the Tree and Woodlands Team. Information on signage reviewed annually, sign replaced if it becomes faded or damaged.	Formal annual inspection incorporating GPS data. Informal inspections throughout the year.
Monitoring	Phase one habitat survey undertaken in 2019	To be repeated at five year intervals. Survey cycles across DBC sites to be harmonised.
Visitor survey	Not previously undertaken	Undertaken in 2022 to prepare SANG management plan

6.1 Monitoring

All net new homes granted permission will be required to secure or make proportionate contributions towards the delivery of SANG. These will be expected to be monitored by the Council through the following processes.

- Monitoring of Section 106/Unilateral Undertakings – SANG contributions will become due to Dacorum Borough Council, at the point of commencement. Although developers will be expected to notify the Council of commencement, this cannot be relied upon and it will be necessary for the Infrastructure Team to closely monitor sites.
- SANG contributions may also be collected through a simplified Unilateral Undertaking or Section 111 process (to be determined), where it would be expected that payments would need to be confirmed prior to the grant of planning permission.
- In cases where SANG measures are intended to be provided on site, monitoring of the delivery of these measures will be required, alongside evidence provided by Clean, Safe and Green.
- Robust reporting on SANG contributions received, allocated and spent will be provided on an annual basis through the Infrastructure Funding Statement.
- Ongoing monitoring of effectiveness of measures on site will be implemented.
- There will be a monitoring/administration fee associated with this process.

7. Costs

Table of improvement costs for Chipperfield Common to follow.

