



Friends of Tower Hamlets Cemetery Park

Registered Charity: 1107136

[www.fothcp.org](http://www.fothcp.org)

# Brief for Conservation Management Plan for Tower Hamlets Cemetery Park

November 2020

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# 1 Introduction

The purpose of this brief is to set out what the consultant needs to do when producing a conservation management plan for Tower Hamlets Cemetery Park (THCP).

The aim of the plan is to help recognise the significance of the heritage asset and to include proposals for restoration, repair and development of the site, which will enable the best and most valuable features and assets of the historic cemetery to be protected and restored and its character enhanced in balance with the natural elements of the site.

The CMP will also aid the trustees and staff of the Friends of Tower Hamlets Cemetery Park (FoTHCP) to create a maintenance plan that will be created with input and advice from the consultant.

The site's educational potential and its strategic role as a major heritage asset remains largely untapped. A key theme for this plan is the involvement of both the community and our stakeholders and including hard to reach groups in these conversations. At all relevant opportunities, the community should be involved in the creation of the CMP through providing information, suggestions, and supporting activities themselves. We want the process of developing the plan to bring the community together and engage them with the site and its heritage.

The brief has been prepared by the FoTHCP in consultation with the London Borough of Tower Hamlets (LBTH).

## 1.1 Reason for commissioning the plan

The Conservation Management Plan is being prepared to:

- Ensure the monuments and buildings and layout of the historic cemetery will be better looked after and work towards the removal of the historic cemetery from Historic England's at Risk Register
- Improve visitor experience and understand how to encourage people from a wider demographic to engage with the heritage of THCP
- To provide a framework for the ongoing work of FoTHCP with other partner organisations.
- Support further applications to funders, including the Heritage Lottery Fund.

The purpose of the document is to inform and shape our:

- Both short and long-term management strategy
- Proposals for repair or restoration
- Proposals for interpretation of heritage at THCP
- Project and business development
- Access plan

- Training plan
- Audience and stakeholder development plan
- Maintenance plan
- Volunteer plans

## 1.2 Description of the project

The FoTHCP have received a grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund to carry out the work that is set within this brief. The project aims to build the organisational resilience of FoTHCP, to strengthen our organization and to build the capacity of our staff and volunteers to better manage heritage in both the short and long term.

This plan will be a key document for our organisation which future annual plans and maintenance schedules will be based upon. We will use this plan to design further specific projects in the future that could be funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund and other grant giving organisations.

## 1.3 Extra research, investigation or planning

The consultant is asked to include the following extra work in association with the project:

- Carry out a condition survey of the monuments at the Cemetery Park
- Develop proposals for repair or restoration
- Prepare a training plan on this plan for staff, trustees and volunteers
- Help prepare a 10-year maintenance plan

We will consider commissioning more work alongside the conservation management plan if appropriate and as agreed in further discussions. This could include items such as surveys and archeological investigations.

## 1.4 Area the plan should cover

The plan should cover the entirety of the THCP site, which is owned by LBTH and managed by FoTHCP under a Service Level Agreement. This also includes the following which are set out on the attached map:

- 1940s Cemetery Lodge
- Grade II listed Cemetery boundary walls
- Associated sites of Cantrell Road and Ackroyd Drive owned by LBTH and under the same Service Level Agreement (SLA) awarded to FoTHCP

FoTHCP work across other sites such as Shandy Park and Fairfoot and whilst these may need to be looked at to understand how THCP is run and managed they do not need to be included in the Conservation Management Plan.

## 1.5 Description of THCP

The City and Tower Hamlets Cemetery (known locally as Bow Cemetery) opened in 1841 and is the closest to the City of London of London's 'Magnificent Seven' cemeteries created throughout London to house the dead for a growing metropolis during the early 19<sup>th</sup> century

The City of London and Tower Hamlets Cemetery Company struggled to be financially sustainable and the cemetery was closed in November 1965. An Act of Parliament allowed compulsory purchase by the Greater London Council and power to turn the land into a public open space. Local opposition stopped the clearance of the monuments and today the site is managed by the FoTHCP on behalf of THC.

With more than 350,000 people buried in the 27 acres of the historic cemetery the large proportion are working class, however the grander monuments show that a large number of significant local residents were buried in THC and new discoveries of those who helped shaped our history are gradually being uncovered. Still visited by families who have immediate family buried in THC, THCP remains a site of interest for local historians and for people searching for relatives buried here as well as a peaceful and tranquil respite from the bustle of city life.

THCP a Local Nature Reserve (LNR). The LNR designation includes not only the historic cemetery but also the adjoining areas of Scrapyard Meadow (Cantrell Road) and Ackroyd Drive Greenlink. The whole LNR is a Site of Metropolitan Importance for Nature Conservation.

The majority of the Cemetery Park is woodland. It has been recognised as the most urban woodland in London and has been greatly diversified over time including a gradual reduction of sycamore, new tree planting, and the development of a rich groundcover of grasses, bulbs and wildflowers. There are five wildlife ponds. About a third of the LNR is grassland, much of it flower rich meadow.

The Cemetery Park is managed and cared for by the dedicated trustees, staff and volunteers of the FoTHCP, under a service level agreement (contract) with LBTH. The FoTHCP manage over 31 acres of woodland and cemetery, of which 27 acres includes the original cemetery.

THCP is a heritage asset because it has been officially protected as:

- A registered park
- A site in a designated conservation area
- A site with 7 Grade II listed monuments (graves) with Historic England. Two sections of the boundary wall are also Grade II listed
- A site on the Heritage At Risk register with 1 listed monument also on the HAR
- A Site of Metropolitan Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC)
- A Local Nature Reserve
- A site with Green Flag Nature status

THCPis also important for:

- Local heritage and history
- The local and wider London community
- A number of special interest groups, including local history groups and mental health organisations
- Local wildlife
- A geological treasure trove

## 1.6 Existing documents

The consultant should take account of the following documents that are available:

- Park management plan (covers planting and habitat care)
- Biodiversity records (eg. 20 years of butterfly recording, 12 years of beetle records)
- Health and Safety tree survey (2017)
- Historic grid maps and photos
- Public graves summary
- Health & Safety audit of monuments (2018)
- Visitor survey and other similar documents
- FoTHCP Business plan
- People-management policies (eg. safeguarding, equal opportunities, volunteer)
- Access audit of Cantrell road
- Previous heritage assessments from English Heritage including the 1999 Conservation Report and the listed monument information
- Green Flag Management Plan

## 2. Contents of the plan

The contents of the final written plan should:

- Be based on the Conservation Management Plan guidance set out by the Heritage Lottery Fund that can be found here <https://www.heritagefund.org.uk/publications/conservation-planning-guidance>
- Meet the information requirements in the checklists for:
  - historic places (buildings, landscapes or parks)
  - collections or archives
  - buried archaeology
  - biodiversity or nature conservation and earth heritage

The plan needs to include the following aspects

- Summary description
- Ownership and legal matters
- Historical context, establishment and development of the cemetery
- Patterns of consecration, burial uses, layouts and arrangements
- Topography and geology
- Funerary monuments and sculptures
- Cultural and biographical heritage
- Nature conservation
- Arboriculture
- Hydrogeology, hydrology, drainage
- Infrastructure, access and circulation
- Amenity and open space
- User surveys and value
- Any aspects of intangible cultural heritage linked to the site
- Management of the site

The consultant must also deal with the following issues:

- THCP is also used by a number of other organisations, including SETPOINT London East
- FoTHCP do not own the site, we work under a Service Level Agreement from Tower Hamlets Council
- All community engagement work will need to be done in a way that complies with the current restrictions due to the Coronavirus pandemic

## 3. Collecting information and consultation

### 3.1 Stakeholders

As highlighted in the Introduction, involving the community in the development of this plan is key. The community should feel ownership of the plan through their engagement in the process of its development.

Stakeholder and community consultation and activities will be led by FoTHCP, with advice provided by the consultant, and in some cases additional facilitation (eg. presenting technical aspects of the plan) or providing materials such as presentations or leaflets where needed.

A series of focus groups, workshops and surveys will be held with both current and potential users to capture the widest possible range of views. These will be led by the Heritage Officer at THCP in partnership with the consultant. The information collected will directly feed into the plan, and how the site should be managed for, and by, the community over the next 10+ years.

Those engaged in this project will include:

- People directly involved in caring for the asset (FoTHCP trustees, staff and key volunteers, LBTH, SETPOINT London East)
- Regular users, including members of FoTHCP, corporate volunteers, regular volunteers
- Underrepresented minority groups including: local ethnic communities, schoolchildren, young people (11-18 years old) and older people
- Wider-interest groups (eg. East London History Society, wildlife specialists)
- National stakeholders
- Statutory organisations
- Partner organisations that regularly use THCP eg. Grounded Ecotherapy
- Local residents and community organisations
- Other interested parties (eg. those that have surveyed the Cemetery Wall)

The consultant will also be asked to present the first draft of their plan to stakeholders and the wider community in 1-2 workshops, these may be virtual or split into several smaller workshops depending on current COVID restrictions at the time of the consultations.

## 3.2 Understanding THCP

### 3.2.1 History and context

As part of the section of the plan, the consultant will need to describe how THCP has changed over time, from the earliest period to the present day to help understand our heritage and the significance of that heritage. To do this, we will expect them to use documentary research, archival information, historical maps and plans, archaeological information, oral history and field observations. The research should go from earliest times to the present day. This work will be supported by the FoTHCP Heritage Officer and the heritage volunteer team.

The most important sources of historical information for THCP are:

- Records from City of London and Tower Hamlets Cemetery held at the London Metropolitan Archives.
- Stone Stories Newsletter of the FoTHCP
- Every Stone Tells a Story by Rosemary Taylor
- Shop to Shore publication by FoTHCP
- 21st Anniversary Publication by FoTHCP
- London Cemeteries by Hugh Mellor
- Historical and Conservation Report by Roger Bowdler (May 1999)
- The knowledge gathered by our team of Heritage volunteers

We will ask the consultant to create a set of maps showing the history of the site. They should use historical Ordnance Survey maps, other maps and etchings or paintings, historical research, archaeological and field evidence to create a set of plans at a standard scale, showing how THCP has changed over time. This will also help us to create more effective mapping of the site for future projects. The consultant should carry out enough research to place THCP in its broader social, architectural, and ecological context to understand THCP and inform the assessment of the heritage significance of the site.

### 3.2.2 Social history

The research should cover the social history of THCP, including the stories of those who created it, used it, were associated with it or valued it. The consultant should use historical sources and a programme of oral history in consultation with:

- FoTHCP Heritage Officer, and heritage volunteers;
- East London History Society, Cemetery Club, Oral History Society, Victorian Society;
- East London Family History
- Local History Groups
- Key trustees involved in the formation of the FoTHCP and Heritage Projects

The research should cover the following:

- Who designed and built the cemetery? Who and what inspired the design? What did the original design look like?
- Has the site been associated with particular events or movements in history?
- Are there any elements of intangible cultural heritage associated with the cemetery?
- How was the cemetery funded? Where did the resources come from?
- Is or was it associated with or used by groups whose history is not well-documented?
- Has there been any controversy in saving and restoring the site or any changes throughout its history? Who was involved and what happened?
- Does the care of the site today depend on traditional skills or knowledge? If so which skills?

### 3.2.3 Management information

The consultant will need to be familiar with THCP's management background to describe how it operates today. This information will also be used later in the plan to develop policies that are consistent with local, regional or national strategies, or with relevant legislation or standards. They should collect copies of relevant documents and summarise the main points. The information to be collected will include:

- Protection, conservation or registration documents (local, regional, national or international);
- a condition survey
- information about who uses the site today – how and why
- A conservation history – any previous reports on repairs, conservation, restoration, development or other action
- Current management requirements or standards that need to be met (health and safety, disability access and environmental health)
- Relevant planning policy documents, such as statutory plans or other strategic plans;
- current management policies adopted by the organisation, including training, access or education policies, health and safety policies and so on
- Copies of any leases or management agreements for the asset
- Any other local, regional or national strategies that are relevant to the asset, such as regeneration strategies

### 3.2.4 Field survey, gazetteer and inventory

We will ask the consultant to prepare a detailed inventory and gazetteer for THCP, which combines information about all the different types of heritage into one single inventory or survey. This will involve fieldwork to identify the main elements, features or areas, and will use the previously compiled background research. The entry for each element should include:

- The history (from oral or archival sources)
- A description of what survives (ecology, archaeology, interior fixtures and fittings, collections, planting and so on)

- Planting list
- Significance
- Any designation
- Management issues, including the condition
- Sources (note any relevant reports or information)

Each element should be numbered, and if possible photographed and related to a base map.

The inventory should be set out as a database.

The consultant should use the following surveys:

- Health & Safety tree survey
- Health & Safety audit of monuments
- Historical and Conservation Report by Roger Bowdler May 1999

### 3.2.5 Typology

We will ask the consultant to prepare a basic typology of paths, benches and buildings (although modern and not part of the original site), identifying the history, date, significance and management issues for each feature.

## 3.3 Significance

The consultant should prepare a statement of heritage and biodiversity significance for THCP as a whole. Setting out how and why THCP is significant and to whom. They should also provide more detailed information about the significance of different parts of THCP which helps day-to-day management. They should explain very clearly how and on what basis the assessment of significance has been prepared, and who has been involved or consulted in preparing it. The statement should cover the aesthetic, historical, community, archeological and biodiversity significance of the site.

**Note:** much of this information can be gathered by FoTHCP during stakeholder workshops.

The consultant should deal with the following areas of significance:

- Is the natural heritage of importance to science, for example for its wildlife, geology, biodiversity or ecology?
- Is it rare or endangered?
- Why is the heritage important to local, national or world history?
- Is it associated with important people or events? How does it contribute to our understanding of the past?
- What are the aesthetic and architectural qualities of the buildings, spaces or designed landscapes?
- What is its contribution to the wider environment in which it sits?

- Is the heritage of archaeological significance? What can the buildings, landscape or buried remains tell us about past events? What do we know about the pattern of construction, use or alteration?
- Is the heritage or landscape of technical importance – does it tell us about innovation?
- How does the local community value the place? What do they do there?
- Is it a source of formal or informal learning? Is it used for recreation?
- Has the heritage been featured in films, paintings or in literature?
- Is it important for commemorative or spiritual reasons?
- Does its current use contribute to its significance?
- Has the value of the heritage changed through time? Was it important for different reasons in the past?
- Is the story of its preservation important?

Also explain who it is important to. Make sure you have spoken to:

- The community who live or work around the site
- Statutory conservation agencies (where relevant), amenity societies, local government conservation departments
- Any groups who take an interest in the heritage
- People who use the heritage site now, such as for recreation or enjoyment
- Volunteers who help look after the site

### 3.4 Issues and vulnerability

The consultant should set out a clear statement of how and why the heritage of THCP is vulnerable, and what other issues affect its long-term future. They should explain what is happening to the heritage, how it might be vulnerable and what the potential threats are to its long and short term survival.

They should identify any risks for THCP, such as:

- Construction or landscape works might put wildlife or archaeology at risk
- Enhanced security measures could make the heritage less accessible to the public
- Monuments might be vulnerable to erosion or vandalism as a result of increased access
- New buildings around the site could have a negative impact on its appearance

They should cover a wide range of things, from the condition of the heritage through to ownership, use, boundaries, resources, management problems, access, contents and public expectations. It should explore competing priorities such as conservation and commercial pressures.

The consultant should deal conflicts between different values for THCP:

- Nature conservation and heritage
- Needs of users and conservation and heritage aims

### 3.5 Conservation management policies

The consultant will work with FoTHCP and wider project team to produce a set of management policies for the site, in line with best practice and takes into consideration the current innovative strategies adopted by FoTHCP for habitat management. These policies will be specific to the needs of THCP and the people who value it. They will be based on an understanding of THCP, how it is valued and current management issues.

The consultant should develop policies for:

- Conservation:
  - conserve or enhance each of the different types of heritage
  - understand and attempt to any conflicts between different types of heritage and heritage and nature
  - and meet conservation standards for each kind of heritage
- New work
- Access
- Climate change
- Effects on the environment
- Managing information about our heritage
- Events within THCP (eg. Festivals)

### 3.6 Maintenance plan

The consultant will assist in preparing a 10-year maintenance plan in line with the policies in the conservation management plan. This will be produced in partnership with the staff and trustees at FoTHCP. It should include:

- Arrangements for inspecting THCP every year
- A detailed list of items to be inspected, risk assessed and maintained, including immediate, yearly and longer-term actions
- The timing of work
- The costs and resources needed for maintenance
- Potential income streams to fund the maintenance of the site
- Who will be responsible for the work
- Arrangements for keeping an ongoing record of maintenance

The consultant should also deal with the following specific maintenance or management issues:

- To be aware of 24hour opening of Cemetery Park to public
- Impact of joint nature and monument conservation at a single site
- Respect of original layout and fabric of the cemetery
- National notable, red data book species and uncommon species for London of plants and animals

## 4. Filling gaps – extra research, analysis and investigation and training

As well as preparing a conservation management plan, we may ask the consultant to carry out further work specifically relating to the project. The need for this work has been identified by:

- The project team
- Advice from other organisations, including those that have carried out these plans before

### 4.1 Research, analysis and investigation

As well as the plan, the consultant may deem it necessary to carry out one or more of the following surveys after reviewing the site and our current documentation and information:

- An archaeological analysis of the buildings or the landscape
- An archaeological assessment
- An ecological or habitat survey
- Community or user surveys\*
- A condition survey of the monuments on the site
- A geophysical survey
- A planting survey
- A survey of monuments for listing on architectural merit
- A survey of the way collections or archives are stored and used
- A security survey
- A vision for a heritage biodiversity visitors centre\*
- Oral-history research\*

A priority is the condition survey as it is integral to conservation management plan and the results of it will be integrated into the plan. A condition survey helps to identify what heritage is important, why and to whom and assess the risks and opportunities of this heritage.

\*Information within these areas will be led by FoTHCP during their stakeholder engagement workshops.

## 4.2 Training

### 4.2.1 Training on the contents of this plan

We would like the consultant to deliver training on the process and contents of the plan to trustees, staff and key volunteers. We would also like them to deliver training on the 10 year maintenance plan and next steps to help embed the plan within the organisation.

### 4.2.2 Training in monument conservation

We would like the consultant to deliver training on monument conservation to FoTHCP staff, trustees and volunteers. This training would be delivered separately to management plan and training and would occur at a relevant point in time after the plan has been adopted.

## 5. Managing the plan

### 5.1 Timing

The current timetable for the project is as follows:

- Tenders received by: 14<sup>th</sup> December 2020
- Start of work: 11<sup>th</sup> January 2021 (flexible, to be discussed with the winning contractor)
- Draft plan submitted: 1<sup>st</sup> March 2022?
- Finalised plan submitted: 1<sup>st</sup> May 2022
- Training workshop complete: 1<sup>st</sup> August 2022

### 5.2 Project management and monitoring

We will ask the consultant to work with people who are involved in THCP to make sure that they fully understand the plan and that there is an appropriate system in place for putting the plan into practice and updating in the future. FoTHCP will have ownership of the document and a designated member of the trustees will take final responsibility for the plan.

The client for the work is the Friends of Tower Hamlets Cemetery Park.

The project will be managed by the Heritage Officer, FoTHCP.

The consultant will also work with the staff and trustees, and LBTH, as instructed on start of project.

The day-to-day contact for the project will be the Heritage Officer, FoTHCP, and can arrange access to the site as required.

The project steering group will be formally consulted at the following stages in the planning process:

- After the consultant has been appointed, to agree the work programme and dates for review points
- When the gazetteer and text on understanding the site have been produced
- When the statement of significance has been produced
- When the text on conservation policy has been completed
- When the first full draft of the plan has been completed
- And informally at other times as appropriate

Payments will be made at the following stages:

- 25% upon signing of contract
- 50% upon first full draft
- 25% upon finalised version submitted, with supporting documentation, and agreed training delivered

### 5.3 Responsibilities

The consultant will be responsible for the programme of involvement and consultation, as set out in section 3.1.

The Board of Trustees will be responsible for making sure that the organisation adopts the plan, and that staff are trained in its content in the future.

## 6. Information needed from consultant

### 6.1 Project design and costs

The consultant should provide a project design in response to this brief, setting out how the plan will be approached, the method of working, and any matters not covered by the brief. The project design should include:

- How the consultants will respond to the brief, including a method statement which explains
- How the partnership process will be managed
- The strategy for consultation and involvement
- The strategy for background research
- The strategy for fieldwork and surveys
- An explanation of how any extra work will be carried out and delivered and whether that will be in house or external contractors
- The range of professional skills which people involved in the project will need, including the names and CVs of proposed team members and their specific responsibilities and any arrangements for subcontracting parts of the work
- A resource plan showing the breakdown of chargeable hours between individuals and project stages
- A timetable for the project, including milestones and dates, which takes account of the time needed to involve and consult people on drafts
- A timetable for training
- A separate cost for designing, printing and distributing the final document
- The extent of professional insurance or indemnity cover

The consultant should provide at least two examples of previous plans or similar documents.

### 6.2 Skills

The project team should be headed by a lead consultant with expertise ideally in Cemetery Parks, landscapes, monuments (graves), community involvement and stakeholder engagement. Experience with environmental aspect of site management is desirable.

The lead consultant will also need access to expertise in:

- Planning conservation management
- Historical research
- Social history and community involvement
- Conserving ecology and wildlife
- Conservation surveying, architecture or engineering
- Training
- Managing and interpreting heritage

The following skills and expertise can also be provided by in-house staff and volunteers:

- Conserving ecology and wildlife
- Historic research
- Social history and community involvement

## 7. Other matters

### 7.1 Publication

The consultant will make arrangements for the final publication of the document, and will provide:

- Camera-ready text
- 2 copies of the main text and 2 copies of the appendices
- Text that is suitable for loading onto a website (edited to reduce size if necessary)

The hard copy will be an A4 document with photographs and illustrations set within the text. Reduced copies of maps and plans should be provided in the text. Full-size copies of maps, plans or drawings should be provided on a stable medium (a material that will last for a long time). The gazetteer or inventory and other supporting information should be provided in bound appendices.

Copies of the final plan should be provided for all of the partners who were involved in preparing it, including:

- London Borough Tower Hamlets
- The local record office
- Sites and Monuments Record
- The local planning authority
- Statutory agencies
- Heritage Lottery Fund

### 7.2 Copyright and confidentiality

The author owns the copyright for the plan and should be prepared to grant the funding organisation and FoTHCP a license to use the plan to protect the asset.

The lead consultant should clear the copyright for any illustrations or other material used.

### 7.3 Archiving

New material that was collected while the plan was being prepared will be passed to Friends of Tower Hamlets Cemetery Park and The East London History Society for archiving.

## 8. Attachments to the brief

- Invitation to Tender Document
- Map of Tower Hamlets Cemetery Park
- Copy of Tower Hamlets Cemetery Park Heritage Trail
- Copy of Tower Hamlets Cemetery Park Plants and People Trail