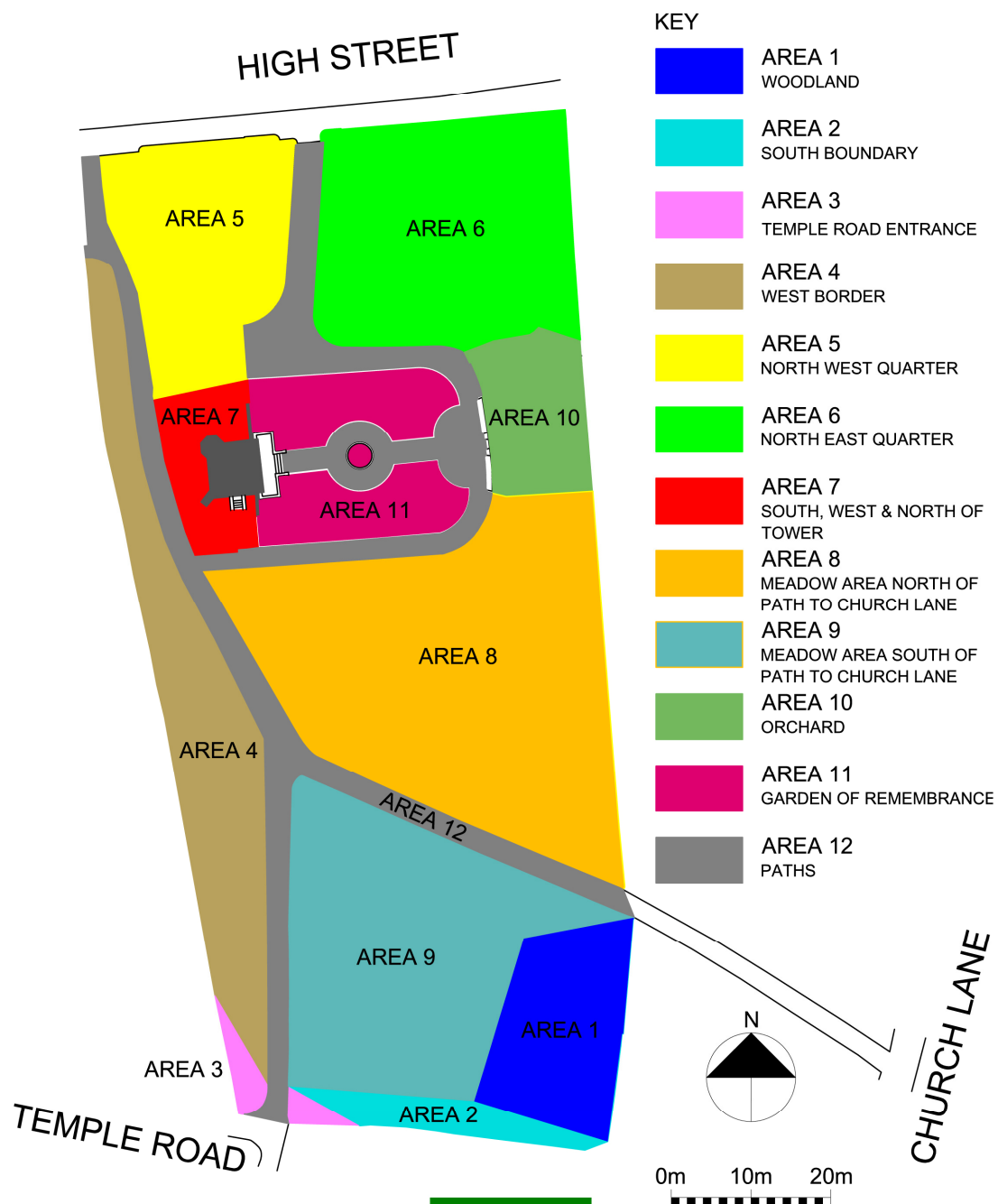


The ecology of the churchyard

6.5.1 Plan showing Ecology Areas



FoHCT
Friends of Hornsey Church Tower

**ST.MARY'S HORNSEY
CHURCHYARD ECOLOGY AREAS**

6.5.2 General

The Flora of the Churchyard is of various origins. It includes many native plants, together with garden escapes. The variety is demonstrated by the wild plants and grasses in flower observed in June 2010, which included Lucerne, Meadow foxtail, Yorkshire Fog grass, Wall barley, Rye grass, Silk knot grass, Barren brome (*Bromus sterilis*), Creeping buttercup, Meadow buttercup, Woody nightshade, Dog rose, Feverfew (double), Sow Thistle, Nipplewort, Creeping cinquefoil, Jack go to bed at Noon, Pineapple weed (in cracks between paving stones), Cleaver, Daisy, Herb Robert, Elder, Dandelion, White clover, Common nettle. Likewise both the trees and the plants in the Garden of Remembrance include both native and exotic species. See Appendix 6.7 for a list of trees and wild plants and Appendix 6.8 for a list of new Garden of Remembrance plants.

A variety of management regimes have been adopted to encourage biodiversity and enhance the distinctive character of different parts of the Churchyard. The FoHCT have divided the Churchyard and Garden of Remembrance into a number of Areas to reflect their differing characters. These are referred to below.

6.5.3 Bird and Insect Life

The policies detailed below for maintaining and increasing biodiversity of plant life are vital for encouraging diverse bird and insect life. Significant aspects of the Churchyard for this purpose include:

- Large trees (in contrast with those in neighbouring streets and gardens), provide opportunities not only for nesting birds, but perching places, for example for flocks of starlings observed in autumn 2010.
- Berry bearing trees such as Yew, Hawthorn, Holly and Elder, which provide food for birds.
- Undergrowth especially Ivy, Brambles and Nettles, which are valuable for both bird and insect life.
- Piles of rotting wood (maintained around the edges of the site) which encourage fungi and insects.
- Horticultural shrubs and plants which encourage insects; for example Buddleia and Lonicera fragrantissima which are particularly attractive to butterflies and Cotoneaster, Lavender and Ajuga which strongly attract bees and other pollinators.
- A meadow area, not subject to regular summer mowing, for wild flowers to proliferate.

6.5.3.1 Policy

- Closer observation of bird and insect life in the Churchyard by means of special studies.
- Appropriate choice of plants, for example in the replanting of the Garden of Remembrance.
- Maintenance of areas of undergrowth and nettles.
- Maintenance of wood piles.
- Leave dead seed heads on horticultural plants over winter.

6.5.4 Description of Area 1 - *Woodland, South-east corner*

This area has a small but interesting collection of native trees, including Hornbeam, Oak, Hawthorn and Ash. They would appear to have grown up after the land became part of the Churchyard c. 1840, possibly developing from a former hedge. The Hornbeams could be

remote descendants from the ancient woodland of Middlesex, where this tree occurred frequently (see also Highgate Wood and Queens Wood). The Hawthorns near the south boundary and elsewhere in the Churchyard may be descended from the 'quickthorn' hedge around the Churchyard which is mentioned in 18th century documents and appears in early 19th century views. Spring flowers include bluebells (Spanish, although some native ones were planted c. 2000) and snowdrops and in summer there are buttercups (creeping and meadow), cow parsley and alkanet.

6.5.4.1 Policy

- Removal of ash and sycamore seedlings.
- Maintenance of undergrowth, but keeping a perimeter path to provide access to the row of tombs along the east border (these included the statutorily listed Harriet Long/Jacob Walker tomb, which is frequently visited).
- Strengthening the boundary edges with native hedge plants.

6.5.5 Description of Area 2 - South Boundary

An overgrown area with Brambles including the 'Himalayan Giant' Blackberry. Trees (including a mature Black Poplar and a Sycamore) along this boundary have been lost in recent years; a Willow (Salix) was planted in spring 2010. Undergrowth includes Vinca major (probably a garden escapee).

6.5.5.1 Policy

- To limit expansion of brambles and undergrowth over the tombs in this area and discourage their expansion over the adjoining grassland.
- Monitor condition of boundary fences and take action to have these repaired when necessary.

6.5.6 Description of Area 3 - Temple Road entrance

Lilac tree east of the entrance; Holly and Hawthorn hedge (planted c. 2006) to the west, Buddleia and Elder by adjacent house wall. Undergrowth: Broad leaved Dock, Nettle. A FoHCT notice board stands here.

6.5.6.1 Policy

- Strengthening and expanding the Holly and Hawthorn hedge to fill the whole corner as a deterrent to fly tipping.
- Encouraging the Council to install better litter and dog bins adjacent to this entrance.

6.5.7 Description of Area 4 - West border

This narrow strip between the main N-S path and the garden wall on the west side has several tombs of interest, including some large chest tombs. Three compost containers are sited near the wall, largely hidden by trees. Wood piles are also maintained in this area. The south end of the area near Temple Road, which gets plenty of sun, has rough grass with nettles and docks. Trees near the wall include a Maple and a Horse Chestnut seedling. The middle area SW of the Tower is densely overgrown with elm suckers, successors to the Elm trees shown on old views, also Holly, Elder, Lime hybrid (*Tilia cordata*), Brambles and Nettles. In spring this area is remarkable for its display of Celandines. The northern end, which is heavily overshadowed by the Tower and the Hollies on the other side of the path,

has a variety of trees, including a Sorbus (possibly Sorbus thuringiaca), and Crab Apple, also numerous Elder and Maple seedlings, and dense ground cover of Ivy. A three section notice board is located facing the High Street for use by FoHCT, Church and The Intimate Space

6.5.7.1 Policy

- Regular cutting of the areas of grass whilst retaining some defined areas of nettles.
- Sufficient clearing of undergrowth to maintain tombs and sight lines.
- Removal of tree seedlings growing in tombs.
- Allow controlled growth of brambles in some areas as a deterrent to inappropriate activity.
- Cutting back of vegetation overhanging the cycle path to maintain its full width.
- Improvement of entrance from High Street to deter litter and improve appearance.

6.5.8 Description of Area 5 – North-west quarter

This is a confused area owing to its earlier history. By the early 19th century there was a row of substantial chest tombs, some of them raised up on mounds because of the waterlogged ground. Their collapsed remains account for the irregular surface. An impressive Ash tree, the largest tree in the Churchyard, is sited on a mound near the central path from the High Street. Plants found here include Wavy Bittercress. West of the Ash are a group of Holly trees, some of them Highclere Hollies, which originally flanked a path to the North door of the church from the NW corner of the Churchyard. They have now grown into substantial trees, their dense foliage and berries attracting many birds. In a corner near the NW entrance to the Churchyard is a fine Magnolia tree, somewhat crowded by a young Yew tree and large Holly bush. There is also a mature Hawthorn close to the High Street hedge.

6.5.8.1 Policy

- Regular grass cutting.
- Clearance of some undergrowth around tombs.
- Remove Holly shoots at base of trees.
- Consider planting more Hollies to emphasise line of old drive.
- Watching brief for Ash, which occasionally has shed branches.
- Control spread of brambles under large Ash tree
- Regular cutting back of High Street hedge to encourage dense growth at bottom.
- Maintain carpet of Ivy to the side of the Holly trees.
- Keep Yew tree in check to prevent intrusion into adjacent Magnolia.
- Suspend tree pruning in nesting season.

6.5.9 Description of Area 6 – North-east quarter.

A mixed area of grass and mature trees, with a large number of ledger tombs, and four chest tombs, including the statutorily listed tomb of Samuel Rogers in the NE corner. The many trees include a mature Hornbeam, a large Yew, and a somewhat confused but picturesque central tangle with Red Horse Chestnut, Hawthorn, Yew, Hornbeam, Cypress, Sycamore and Prunus. The Hawthorns include a Midland Hawthorn. There is a young

Service tree (*Sorbus domestica*) near the Infant School entrance. The hedge along the High Street, planted 2004, has mixed hedgerow plants including Hawthorn, Rose, Bramble, Hazel, Yew, Privet, Guelder rose, Field Maple.

6.5.9.1 Policy

- Regular grass cutting.
- Clearing of undergrowth around tombs.
- Ivy undergrowth to be confined to area below Hollies and to large multi stemmed elder tree.
- Regular pruning of trees at low level and cutting back of vegetation to maintain sight lines as a deterrent to undesirable activities.
- Regular cutting back of High Street hedge to encourage dense growth at bottom.
- Cutting back of vegetation by school boundary to allow more light into the NE corner.
- Suspend tree pruning in nesting season.

6.5.10 Description of Area 7 - *South, West and North of the Tower*

This small area, separated by railings from the path, has some of the oldest standing tombstones. Yew, Holly and Dog Rose grow along the railings. A FoHCT notice board stands here.

6.5.10.1 Policy

- Grass to be kept short by regular mowing, to provide easy access to Tower and to keep tombs visible.
- Yews and Holly to be encouraged to grow into a small hedge.
- Rose to be pruned regularly.
- Control growth of Elder, particularly close to the Tower.

6.5.11 Description of Area 8 – *Meadow area North of path to Church Lane*

This open, sunny area has relatively few tombs and is popular for dog walking, picnics and sunbathing. Notable trees: near the Tower, a very fine and large Norway Maple, remarkable for its brilliant autumn colour. Near the East fence, a Field Maple and a London Plane. To the North of the Plane is a Wild Cherry, planted November 2010, to commemorate Joan Schwitzer, first chairman of FoHCT. A churchyard ecology interpretation board is located in this area.

6.5.11.1 Policy

- Regular mowing during the summer period to allow greater recreational use.
- Cutting back of young trees growing out of tombs.
- Cutting back excess vegetation on east border, whilst still maintaining adequate screening of school playground.

6.5.12 Description of Area 9 - *Meadow area South of path to Church Lane*

This area is dominated by a large ash tree. Two park benches are sited beside the Church Lane path. An informal 'desire line' path runs diagonally from the Temple Road entrance toward Church Lane. Noticeably damp patches remain in some areas after the weather is wet. In dry weather significant cracks form in the ground. The range of flowering spring

and summer plants includes Buttercup, Cow Parsley, Primrose, Ivy-leaved speedwell (*Veronica hederifolia*), Native cowslip (*Primula veris*), Dandelion (*Taraxacum officianalis*), Red and White clover, and various grasses. Mouse-eared chickweed (*Cerastium pontanum*) is found near tombs.

6.5.12.1 Policy

- Continue the grass cutting regime, introduced in 2010, of a single cut in late summer (after flower seed has set) followed by raking up the grass cuttings. A strip one metre wide to be mown regularly along the edges of Church Path and Church Lane path to differentiate this area of meadow grass.
- Long term monitoring of plant species to gauge effect of grass cutting regime and possible variations in damp areas.
- Removal of Ash seedlings growing out of tombs.
- Monitoring of fungal disease in large ash tree.

6.5.13 Description of Area 10 - Orchard

This is a railed area which contains a number of tombs, lying between the Garden of Remembrance and the school fence. The railings were erected c.2003 to provide a 'dog free' area adjacent to the Infant School entrance. The reason for forming this area was to provide the school with a protected green space unlike their hard landscaped playground. The area is now being developed as an 'orchard'. Four apple trees (Jonagold and James Grieve) were planted in 2010. In 2018 the school installed two raised beds where Infant School children planted vegetables.

6.5.13.1 Policy

- Regular grass cutting.
- Regular clearance of weeds, brambles and invasive shrubs and trees.
- Monitoring of apple trees.
- Removal of the Goat Willow by school fence which is growing out of a tomb and overshadows the apple trees.
- Further planting: possibly fruit bushes along southern railings.

6.5.14 Description of Area 11 - Garden of Remembrance

This was created in 1950, on the site of the old church, as the Borough of Hornsey's official Second World War Garden of Remembrance, as is recorded on a circular plaque now attached to the wall to the north of the Tower. The layout consists of two lawns surrounded by flower beds, flanking a path leading E-W to the Tower. The path widens to a central circle containing a circular bed. The flower beds all have low stone retaining walls. Photographs show that the original planting consisted of low bedding plants. At an early stage two Ginkgo trees were planted half way along each of the north and south beds. They are now the chief features of the garden, their yellow foliage making a fine show in the autumn. There were also two trees on each of the lawns. All have now died and have been removed. In the 1970s bedding plants were replaced by bushes, largely evergreen, which over thirty years grew to an inappropriate size and density. Various 'accidental' plants observed in 2010 include a Fern in the wall below the memorial plaque, and in the lawns: Yellow archangel; Sheeps sorrel; (N Side): and Good Friday grass (*Luzula campestris*), Clover, Prickly oxtongue (S side). Renovation began in 2008 with the entire replanting of the South border, originally designed as a 'Scented walk' with plants including

Stipa gigantea, Phlomis, Stachys Byzantina, Helichrysum Italicum, Sedum, Nepeta, and numerous herbs, selected for their ability to withstand drought and provide year round interest. Replanting of the rest of the Garden began in 2010, retaining some of the existing shrubs, including several roses and the Cotoneasters at the corners of the central circle. This has now been completed and is being maintained and added to by regular gardening sessions held by the Friends. A list of new plants for these areas is given in Appendix 6.8.

6.5.14.1 Policy

- New planting in the borders when appropriate, with the overall aim of creating a unified effect, with open views through to the Tower.
- Appropriate planting for the central circle and for the planting troughs on the raised area by the Tower entrance.
- Regular maintenance, including winter mulching, appropriate pruning and cutting back etc.
- Regular cutting of the grass areas, but with attention to any plants of special interest.
- Watching brief for Ginkgos, especially the southern one which has a split trunk.
- Consideration of appropriate repair/maintenance of the walls supporting the raised area in front of the Tower.
- Use of organic gardening principles.
- Choose plants that attract insects, particularly pollinators.
- Choose plants that are drought tolerant.
- Leave dead seed heads on plants overwinter for birds to feed on.
- Clearance of weeds to stone paving by mechanical and non toxic means.

6.5.15 Description of Area 12 - Paths

The N-S (cycle) path has a bound gravel surface over old tarmac; the remaining paths are old tarmac with no topping. The Garden of Remembrance stone paving is not part of this area. A one-metre-wide strip of grass next to these paths on the perimeter of the meadow area is mown regularly. This draws attention to the different policy for the meadow grass beyond.

6.5.15.1 Policy

- Continuation of the mowing of these strips through regular contact with Haringey Parks Department.
- Continual monitoring of defects to path surfaces and malfunctioning of street and flood lighting and continuing contact with Haringey Highways Department concerning these as necessary.
- Monitoring of condition and safety of metal railings to side of cycle path.
- Maintenance of attractive border of granite sets to section of cycle path close to High Street entrance.