Brompton Cemetery Conservation Project

Introduction

A Garden Cemetery

This beautiful landscape is the only Cemetery in the country owned by the Crown and managed by The Royal Parks on behalf of the nation. It is one of London’s Magnificent Seven historic cemeteries, which were designed in the mid 1800s to provide public recreation as well as burial space for a rapidly increasing London population.

Brompton Cemetery is a magical place, combining historic monuments, trees and wildlife with the stories of the remarkable people buried here.

With over 700,000 visits per year; Brompton provides a valuable open space. A sightseeing destination and relaxation for those who live and work in this densely populated area of London, which has very few green spaces.

Brompton Cemetery is designated Grade I on English Heritage’s Register of Parks and Gardens and is within a conservation area. Individual historic buildings, monuments and sculptures are Grade II* or Grade II listed. The cemetery is a Site of Nature Conservation Importance (SNCI).

Conservation Project

The Royal Parks is developing a second round application to Heritage Lottery and Big Lottery Funds for this £5 million project to conserve and enhance Brompton Cemetery. But this will only cover a fraction of what needs to be done. More funding is needed to sustain the future of the Cemetery in the face of declining government grants.

The Friends of Brompton Cemetery and other stakeholders are helping us prioritise the project budget and identify what will need additional fundraising. We are aiming to reflect the needs of a range of visitors and protect the wildlife, retaining the unique character of this historic Cemetery.

The Conservation Project involves:

• Redevelopment of the North Lodge with information centre, shop, WCs and cafe.
• Restoration of the Chapel, central colonnades and catacombs
• Conservation of historic landscape, buildings and monuments
• Wildlife conservation to maintain and improve existing habitats
• Community engagement and access improvements
• Volunteers helping to conserve and interpret the cemetery
• Financial sustainability with enhanced visitor facilities and funerary business.

Consultation

Let us know your opinions as part of the ongoing consultation process. These will help us improve the scheme for the planning application in December 2014 and prioritise future maintenance.

What do you think?

While decisions have been made on some elements of the project, we would welcome answers to the questions on the panels and any other comments you may have.

Have a look at the present designs by LDA Design (Landscape Architects) and MRDA (Conservation Architects), which are based on the results of public consultation in 2013. A summary report can be viewed at www.royalparks.org.uk/bromptoncemetery

Please comment on the designs by 17 October 2014:

Email: BromptonProject@royalparks.gsi.gov.uk
Visit: www.royalparks.org.uk/bromptoncemetery
Phone: 0300 061 2000
Attend one of our consultation events (see website)
Write to: Brompton Cemetery, The Chapel, Fulham Road, London, SW10 9UG

Let us know if you would like to be kept up to date with developments.

Consultation Timetable

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<td>Architectural designs</td>
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<td>Planning application to Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea</td>
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<td>Funerary business plan</td>
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Key to Main Proposals

1. Chapel: conservation and refurbishment
2. North Lodge: refurbishment and visitor centre, toilets and cafe
3. Western Catacombs: conservation and stabilisation for burials
4. Children’s space
5. Central Colonnades and Catacombs: conservation and limited restoration
6. Police Box: re-use to benefit the Cemetery
7. South Lodge: refurbish as residential
8. Green Waste Area: move to maintenance yard
9. Maintenance Yard: refurbish with new staff facilities
10. Memorial Garden: redesign planting as part of a future project

Site Wide Proposals

• Conservation of 28 Listed monuments
• Ecology survey and habitat enhancement
• Tree strategy including selective tree removal

![Plan of Main Proposals](image)

![Community event at Brompton Cemetery](image)

What do you think?

Comment at www.royalparks.org.uk/bromptoncemetery
What do you think?
If the proposed extension goes ahead, what do you think should be planted?

Landscape
We are planning to create courtyard spaces and remove the existing turning circle, which detracts from the symmetry of the original design.

The courtyards in front of the cafe and the visitor centre would be separated from the main avenue by planting.

The cemetery was originally designed as a ‘Garden Cemetery’ and planting was an important component of the original layout, enabling the public to walk and enjoy nature, in a similar way to today.

The design work is still at an early stage, and ideas for planting include a mixture of structural shrubs and herbaceous flowering plants.

What do you think?
If the proposed extension goes ahead, what are your preferences and thoughts on building materials?

Materials
These are some of the different materials that could be used in any extension to the building. It is important that these are in keeping with the architectural materials used elsewhere in the cemetery.

Proposed extension
The design of the facades to the proposed extension would echo the entrance gateways behind them, using a contemporary design rather than a direct copy.

The layout and location of the doorways would emphasise the symmetrical paths either side of the main avenue. Re-opening the side gateways would help separate vehicle and pedestrian access.

The design work is at an early stage and these sketches give an impression of the scale and appearance of potential extensions.

Future improvements to the crescent on the Old Brompton Road side of the North Gate will be discussed with the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea separately from the conservation project.

They may be part of benefits arising from the Earl’s Court development.

Possible Planting types
Proposed Visitor Centre and Shop extension
Proposed Cafe extension
New planting beds
Paved courtyard?
Brompton Cemetery Conservation Project

Ecology, Trees & Space for Children

Ecology
The Cemetery is an important site for nature conservation and wildlife. It is a Site of Nature Conservation Importance (SNCI) designated at Grade I by the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea, as it is a valuable habitat for wildlife in a densely built up area.

The Royal Parks is committed to retaining the rich biodiversity of the Cemetery and improving its ecology as part of the Lottery funded project.

Ecological survey to date has included:
- Bats
- Flora
- Trees
- Invertebrates and insects

Landscape & Trees
As part of the project, some trees are to be planted and some are proposed to be removed.

We propose to plant some trees in keeping with the original species according to historic plant lists. Trees that are damaging important historic monuments are proposed for removal as well as carefully considering other trees that are blocking key historic views, or access to monuments.

Children’s space
The monuments are not suitable for climbing and playing on, but there is the option to designate a clear area in the northeast of the Cemetery for natural play. This would have fallen tree trunks or wooden sculptures rather than traditional, fenced, equipment with the chance to learn about wildlife.

There are children buried in the cemetery and it is associated with children’s books. Beatrix Potter lived locally and the names on the gravestones in Brompton Cemetery inspired the characters in her stories.

Access
Long walks without a resting place can be tiring for some visitors and it is proposed to install more benches.

We would be careful to avoid placing them along key sight lines, but could use paths leading from the main avenue. There is also a demand for memorial benches.

Flora and fauna in Brompton Cemetery

What do you think?
- The Conservation Plan and Maintenance Plan will be available for comment from October.
- Contact us if you would like to know more.

What do you think?
How do you feel about the introduction of a small, designated area for children?

What do you think?
Should we install benches to improve access for everyone?

Similar types of children’s space elsewhere in the Royal Parks.

Comment at www.royalparks.org.uk/bromptoncemetery
The circular colonnade at the centre of Brompton Cemetery was based on St Peter’s Square in Rome. It is now on the English Heritage ‘Heritage at Risk Register’. The structure is affected by the later addition of a cast concrete flat roof.

The Brompton Cemetery Conservation Project will include sensitive restoration of the Central Catacombs to remove them from the Buildings at Risk Register, while retaining their special atmosphere.

Improvements include:
- More light
- Stonework repairs – probably through an apprenticeship scheme
- Repairs to roof, floor and render

To secure the future conservation of these structures, we need to ensure a viable use. As with the Western Catacombs, the crypts of the Central Colonnade could be used as a columbarium for cremation urns.

The colonnades could also be lined with memorial plaques as originally intended. Any new plaques would need to be in keeping with the materials and design of the cemetery.

There will be a consultation on the funerary business plan in November 2014.

Comment at www.royalparks.org.uk/bromptoncemetery
**Police Box**

The Police Box at the south entrance to the cemetery could be used to make the southern entrance more welcoming. We would remove the hedge in front of the window.

It could be leased for one or more of the following purposes:

- kiosk for tea / coffee / postcards
- flower stall

**Maintenance Yard & Green Waste**

One side of The North Lodge is currently used as a staff mess room for the gardeners and grave diggers.

These facilities would be moved to the maintenance yard to enable the North Lodge to be used as a visitor centre and café.

The Leaf and Green Waste Yard has an important role to play in the day-to-day management of the cemetery.

However it is currently in an unsightly location, and detracts from the historic significance and natural appearance of the Cemetery. We propose to move this into the maintenance yard.

**South Lodge**

The South Lodge was originally designed as staff accommodation and it is proposed to return this to residential use rather than housing the superintendent in the North Lodge.

Some minor landscaping will be required to enlarge the back garden and provide a car parking space.

The Friends of Brompton Cemetery, currently located in the South Lodge, will be provided with more appropriate premises at the North Lodge instead.

**What do you think?**

Have you any other suggestions for how the police box could be used?

Comment at www.royalparks.org.uk/bromptoncemetery