

Report of	Assistant Director Policy and Corporate	Author	Jess Tipper
Title	Town Wall Management Plan 2019-2024		☎ 508920
Wards affected	Castle		

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 Colchester's Town Wall is one of Colchester's defining characteristics, a significant visual reminder of town's historic importance and a major symbol of community pride. The Town Wall is also a nationally important heritage asset that is statutorily protected as a Scheduled Monument.
- 1.2 The Town Wall Management Plan 2019-2024 provides the vision and overarching strategy for the management of Colchester's Town Wall. The Management Plan 2019-2024 sets out a framework for the maintenance, enhancement, interpretation, presentation and celebration of the Town Wall and its setting, as well as outlining the risks and threats, for the next five years. The Management Plan 2019-2024 also defines the roles and responsibilities of the Council and stakeholders involved in this work. This will allow present and future generations to explore and enjoy the monument and its setting and to realise social and economic benefits for the community.
- 1.3 The Management Plan 2019-2024 has been produced after extensive discussion with key stakeholders. It will replace the existing Management Plan (Colchester Roman Wall: An Integrated Management Plan), which was adopted by the Council in 2011.
- 1.4 The Management Plan 2019-2024 will be reviewed and, where necessary revised, at five year intervals.

2. Decision(s) Required

- 2.1 The Local Plan Committee is asked to adopt the Town Wall Management Plan 2019-2024.

3. Reason for Recommended Decision

- 3.1 Adopting the Town Wall Management Plan 2019-2024 will ensure that the Town Wall is properly managed, maintained and presented, that stipulated and necessary tasks are delivered, that roles and responsibilities are clearly identified, that resources are used

appropriately and that opportunities for external funding are be identified.

4. Alternative Options

- 4.1 The Committee could decide not to adopt the Management Plan, relying instead on the 2011 Plan. However, the existing 2011 plan is already out of date and inaccurate. The lack of an up-to-date Management Plan reduces the Council's ability to make informed decisions relating to the Wall and it reduces (or negatively affects) the Council's ability to secure external funding (for example from Historic England grant aid).

5. Background Information

- 5.1 Colchester's Town Wall is the earliest and one of the most complete town wall circuits surviving from Roman Britain. The distinctive Roman character of the Wall is still very evident and, unlike many other town walls, subsequent alterations have not altered the essential character of the circuit. The Town Wall continues to define the historic centre of the town, creating a distinctive sense of place.
- 5.2 The majority of the Town Wall is a designated heritage asset of national importance, recorded on the National Heritage List for England (NHLE) and statutorily protected as a Scheduled Monument under the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979. The upstanding Wall is also a Grade I Listed Building and protected under the Planning Act (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) 1990.
- 5.3 As one of the most important archaeological monuments and (remains of) one of the most important civic structures within the Borough, the Council (and earlier iterations of the Council) has taken responsibility for, and managed, the Town Wall for many centuries, and this is historically documented for the last 600 years.
- 5.4 The Management Plan 2019-2024 provides the strategy for the management of the Town Wall (including the town gates) for the next five years and defines the roles and responsibilities of the Council and stakeholders. The Plan sets out a framework for the maintenance, enhancement, interpretation, presentation and celebration of the Town Wall and its setting. The Plan also informs stakeholders involved with the management of the Town Wall about how and why decisions are taken and describes their part in service delivery.
- 5.5 This Management Plan 2019-2024 replaces the previous Management Plan (2011) and a number of outstanding actions have been brought forward. The Plan is a dynamic document and the actions may be adapted in response to changes in management context over the life of the Plan. This Management Plan will be reviewed and revised in 2024 as necessary.

- 5.6 The Management Plan 2019-2024 builds on the Heritage Partnership Agreement (HPA) for Colchester Town Wall and the Balkerne Gate, agreed between Historic England and Colchester Borough Council in May 2015. The HPA allows for minor works (running repairs) relating to continued and ongoing maintenance, as specified in the terms of the agreement, for a five-year period; it reduces repetitive Scheduled Monument Applications that would be otherwise required for each new piece of work relating to the Wall, thereby increasing management efficiency for both parties. All other works to the Wall require Scheduled Monument Consent, administered by Historic England on behalf of the Secretary of State. Listed Building Consent will be required for sections of the Wall that are not scheduled, but these sections will be treated in accordance with the requirements of HPA.
- 5.7 The following key stakeholders have been consulted on this Management Plan and their comments have been integrated into the current document: Historic England, Colchester Borough Homes, Colchester and Ipswich Museums Service, Colchester Borough Council Parks and Recreation, Colchester Archaeological Trust, Colchester Natural History Society.
- 5.8 The Colchester Town Wall Management Plan 2019-2024 is attached as Appendix 1.

6. Equality, Diversity and Human Rights implications

- 6.1 An Equality Impact Assessment has been prepared for the Local Plan, and is available to view by clicking on this link:-
<http://www.colchester.gov.uk/article/12745/Policy-and-Corporate>

7. Strategic Plan References

- 7.1 The Town Wall Management Plan contributes to a number of key themes and objectives in the Council's Strategic Plan 2018-21 including;
- *Growth* – Ensuring all residents benefit from the growth of the borough.
 - Help make sure Colchester is a welcoming place for all residents and visitors.
 - Work with partners to create a shared vision for a vibrant town centre.
 - *Responsibility* – Encouraging everyone to do their bit to making our borough even better.
 - Create new routes for walking or cycling and work with partners to make the borough more pedestrian-friendly.
 - *Opportunity* – Promoting and improving Colchester and its environment.
 - Promote and enhance Colchester borough's heritage and visitor attractions to increase visitor numbers and to support job creation.
 - *Wellbeing* – Making Colchester an even better place to live and

supporting those who need help.

- Encourage belonging, involvement and responsibility in all the borough's communities.
- Help residents adopt healthier lifestyles by enabling the provision of excellent leisure facilities and beautiful green spaces, countryside and beaches.

8. Consultation

8.1 No Public Consultation is required for this initiative.

9. Publicity Considerations

9.1 There may be positive publicity as a result of the adoption of this Management Plan, which demonstrates the Council's ongoing commitment to positive management and promotion of the Town Wall. Assuming the objectives are delivered, the Management Plan will ensure that complaints relating to management of the Town Wall are minimised.

10. Financial implications

10.1 There are already significant financial implications for the Council relating to the Wall. The adoption of the Management Plan 2019-2024 will ensure that resources relating to the Town Wall are spent most effectively and efficiently. Good management of the Town Wall, in accordance with best practice as outlined in the Management Plan, will ensure that the Council is well-placed to secure external funding (grants and/or developer contributions).

11. Community Safety Implications

11.1 There are no community safety implications for the Council.

12. Health and Safety Implications

12.1 The Management Plan will ensure that due consideration is given to issues of public safety on the Town Wall.

13. Risk Management Implications

13.1 The Town Wall Management Plan will directly assist in the effective delivery of maintenance and repairs, enhancement of the Wall and its setting and also in promotion and interpretation, in accordance with best practice. It will help ensure that planning decisions with an impact on the Wall are based on the most current historic environment data and guidance available for the Wall.

Appendices

Appendix 1 Colchester Town Wall Management Plan 2019-2024