

ST JOHN'S CHURCH GARDENS PROJECT

Background

St John's Church Gardens is an important site for local heritage, green space and wildlife in Southend. The site is open to the public and contains burials, memorials and other links to locally and nationally important figures and periods of history. However, there is only a limited path network and no information to guide visitors to points of interest. Having carried out research into the site, Groundwork South Essex has been working with St John the Baptist Church, Renaissance Southend and Southend-on-Sea Borough Council to develop proposals for enhancements at the site that will benefit the whole community.

Aims of the Project

- To improve public access into and around the church gardens
- To conserve and celebrate the rich heritage of the churchyard
- To improve the value of the site for wildlife
- To develop opportunities for community involvement and education



Proposals Summary

- Creation of circular walk and reinstatement of central avenue path with new links through the northern boundary wall
- Creation of paved courtyard area incorporating existing gravestones and refreshed planting beds
- Planting of new native trees to replace those removed through management – species chosen for benefits to wildlife and amenity value
- Restoration of key memorials and burials including: Warwick Deeping, Robert Buchanan, Mayor Dowsett, and three Commonwealth War Graves
- Creation of new seating and relaxation areas
- Development of Community and Education programmes looking into the history and other elements of interest at the site
- Design and installation of interpretation information and signage



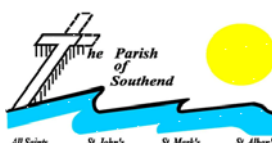
What happens next?

The proposals have already been discussed in detail with a range of local stakeholders including: St John the Baptist Church, Southend-on-Sea Borough Council, local police, English Heritage, Commonwealth War Graves Commission and others. Groundwork will be submitting the proposals as a planning application to the Borough Council and also to the Diocesan Advisory Committee over the next couple of months.

We are now keen to seek your views.

Please complete a questionnaire online at: www.renaissancesouthend.co.uk, or you can send in a completed form using the freepost envelopes provided in the church.

If you want to discuss this project in more detail then please contact Groundwork South Essex:
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