

Appendix 1

St Mary's Episcopal Church – Westend 'Peace Garden' Project

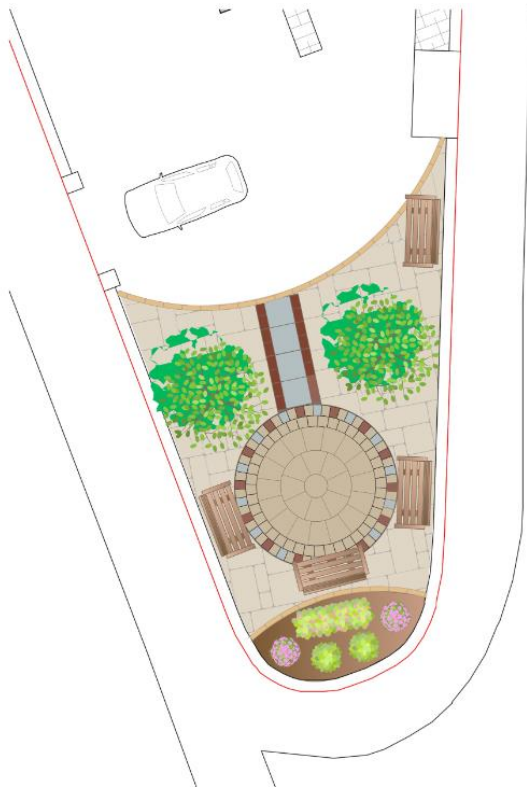
Our Vestry Committee is proceeding with a special "Peace Garden" project having successfully received funding from the Provincial Recovery & Renewal Fund and All Churches grant. It is intended that the garden comprise a low maintenance fully landscaped garden using high quality sandstone paving and a raised bed placed appropriately to create a sense of tranquillity and peace. We wish to provide an improved area for office workers that take their lunch here and encourage wider use from children and elderly and an enhanced area for passers-by on this major road into Aberdeen. The design provides an area for church events and easy access for the infirmed and wheelchair users.

St Mary's Pro-Cathedral wish to work with a local landscape garden company to create a tranquil and peaceful space for the congregation and the local community, including:

- 1) A low maintenance fully landscaped garden using high quality sandstone to match the polychromatic exterior of St Mary's
- 2) Paving design to be based upon designs supplied by a local design company which links to St Mary's external design characteristics (stain glass window and 'tartan kirk' nickname)
- 3) Whole area of garden to be slabbed with curved cobbled edge to define the car parking area closer to the church 4) Paving construction to be capable of withstanding cars turning in the west end area of the church grounds
- 5) Construction of a raised bed area at the apex of the west end area – with space for plaques to explain year and purpose of garden and the symbolism of the planting
- 6) Incorporation of existing bench seats and inclusion of additional durable/no maintenance benches
- 7) Pruning/reshaping of two existing rowan trees (non flourishing silver birch to be addressed)
- 8) Re-siting of existing "Welcome to St Mary's" signage in the area
- 9) Planting. Plant list: Rosemary, Sage, Lavender, Thyme, Camomile and Pulsatilla vulgaris.
- 10) Existing decorative granite chippings to be redistributed to other areas in the church grounds

The church is a Grade 1 listed building in a Conservation area; thus, permissions are required. A Conservation grade architect is overseeing works at the church and the planning application needed for this improvement, but not yet submitted.

The idea was prompted by a post covid opportunity. Encouraging greater use of the area and enhancing it and the community's mental health, while also addressing a difficult maintenance issue of weeds. The church has an ongoing relationship with Barnardo's opposite and they are keen to utilise the garden for young carers and others. The Bruce Nursery which supports the church with its Nativity has been approached to see if the garden could add to excursions by the children. The original hope was also to cater for the elderly – with an ability to interact and perhaps dig, but this will be explored/developed when a garden is in place. The hope is a tactile, scented area with uplifting sharing and love plus an ability to share herbs for use. Any assistance that can be provided to enable this project would be deeply appreciated.



Proposed site for Peace Garden

Front area down to car access points to be hard landscaped.



Shows car access from Carden Place. Garden to fill area at point beyond access.



Aberdeen City Council: Aberdeen Archives, Gallery and Museums (AAGM) -
Aberdeen Art Gallery auto-opening doors

Since reopening Aberdeen Art Gallery after a major redevelopment, visitor feedback has clearly indicated the need to further enhance the equity of access across the building. Significant improvements were made to accessibility of the building during the redevelopment including changing places toilets and a lift to all floors.

The gallery doors are large, double-glazed units between environmentally controlled gallery spaces and on to the roof terraces are much heavier than expected due to their thermal and air-exchange insulation. They have the aim of keeping consistent temperature and humidity conditions within that space. Particularly important as the second floor is the temporary exhibition space which displays loan items. As a result of this need the doors are heavy and difficult to open for those with accessibility requirements. The terrace doors have the same purpose. They are external doors and important to balance conditions within the building as much as possible, however has resulted in them being extremely difficult to open as well.

The adult “changing places” toilet facility has been designed specifically for adults with severe mobility requirements and as such those visitors are usually accompanied by an able-bodied person. However we are also aware that, based on Disability Equality Partnership (DEP) feedback, the door to the facility should be power assisted to allow for easier manoeuvring and access.

By providing nine power-assisted opening doors within the art gallery, this project will address current issues and feedback received from visitors and result in a more equally accessible and inclusive venue for those disadvantaged by mobility related restrictions. Comments received through surveys, comment cards and conversations with AAGM staff include:

‘The unwelcoming doors were heavy to use’

‘Maybe door assistance’

‘BP Gallery not accessible manual heavy doors – not suitable for wheelchairs’

‘It’s difficult to open if you have a stick’

‘Automation would make a big difference as they can be difficult with sticks or for wheelchair users. The exit doors would need automation too.’

‘Doors to temporary exhibition very heavy’

This project demonstrates close alignment to the Local Outcome Improvement Plan:

LOIP 3.2 – ‘Improving health and reducing inequalities’. More than ever museums and galleries are important in enhancing our wellbeing and mental and physical health. Aberdeen Art Gallery has an exciting and engaging programme of exhibitions and events for 2022/2023, and by improving the equity of access is vital to offer these free-to-access services to visitors.

