

Report of the Glebe Field Working Group

Introduction

Though long associated with the church, the Glebe Field (the field adjoining Holy Trinity church, the Trinity Centre and Church Road) has only recently come back into our ownership.

Our vision

*Our vision is to **care for** and use the Glebe Field in sustainable ways, to **share** it with the whole community, to **integrate** it better with the local area and the church buildings, and to leave it as a **legacy** for future generations.*

The working group

The working group has been developing a plan for the field, in line with this vision. We have had a topographical survey of the field and taken professional advice on the trees. We are being supported by a professional landscape architect, who has generously provided her services free of charge, and by a highways engineer on access issues.

Progress to date

A draft plan is beginning to take shape. It is envisaged that the field would remain as an open, green, natural space, with areas identified for various purposes, including children's play, informal walks and meetings, an orchard etc. Some areas and paths would be mown regularly, whilst others could be left as a wildflower meadow. Some new trees would be planted. Some poorer-quality trees would be removed to open up the views and permit access.

Planning issues

We will need planning consent for any change of use. The field is within the Conservation Area, and approval will be needed for any tree works. Access arrangements will need to be approved by the highway authority. We have had informal discussions with the local councillor and the Town Council. We are keeping the diocese informed.

Pedestrian access

We need to provide an attractive pedestrian access to the field, whilst also creating a safer pedestrian access to the church and Trinity Centre from all directions. This has proved challenging, because of issues with visibility for a road crossing and the need to protect trees and their roots, but we are close to a solution that improves access all round.

Ground-source heating

We think it may be possible to provide sustainable heating for the Trinity Centre by installing a ground-source system in the field at the same time as any landscaping scheme. Further work will be needed on this idea.

Access from the Trinity Centre

At present there is no direct door from the Trinity Centre to the field, because of the level difference. We are looking at possible ways to create a better connection between the building and the field.

Why are there no plans to see yet?

Before we can publish a draft plan, we need to finalise the design and make sure it is feasible. Part of this involves seeking confidential "pre-application advice" on planning and access issues from the County Council. We'll do this soon. Then, after any amendments, we will publish the plan for consultation with the church and local community.

How much would it all cost?

We don't have any cost estimates yet. The cost will depend on how ambitious the final scheme is. But if we go ahead, we will need to raise funds specially for the project, and/or seek external grants, as for the Trinity Centre.

For more information – speak with Mike Haddaway who leads the working group.