

SYDNEY GARDENS BATH

INTRODUCTION : THE VISION

The Project Vision...

'Revitalise Sydney Gardens as a beautiful Pleasure Garden with peaceful and tranquil spaces that achieves a renaissance as a unique, fun and restorative environment for all ages; with its remarkable built and natural heritage, people and events, told and experienced in witty and eclectic ways'

Key Drivers & Themes

Cultural heritage

A Sense of Time – revealing hidden layers of history, raising questions of the past and pushing boundaries for the future.

Biodiversity

A Wildlife Refuge – strengthening links with surrounding green infrastructure. Increasing and diversifying wildlife habitats and species.

Curiosity

A Pleasure Garden – a fun, playful, entertaining, eclectic, inviting, stimulating, and restorative environment.

Participation

Enabling Involvement - widening participation and extending use of the Gardens.

Inclusivity

An Accessible Garden – widening engagement and participation through connections, relevance and a welcoming environment.

Innovation

Celebrating Originality – in planting, participation, funding, and partnerships to create and sustain a beautiful place.

Permanence

A Sustainable Garden - play and enjoyment into the future, through long lasting project outcomes, maintainable infrastructure and sustained financial support.

Design Philosophy

Gardens bring people together - they provide the stage that makes it possible for strangers to converse - when many things happen at the same time, but everyone can find their own space; whether it be active or peaceful. Our design philosophy for this project are to:

- ★ Value existing assets - Making the best of what is there;
- ★ Allow quiet spaces as well as celebratory and communal spaces;
- ★ Create interactive spaces, where people meet;
- ★ Coordinate uses to complement each other;
- ★ Be welcoming to all – and encourage new visitors;
- ★ Increasing biodiversity and diversifying habitat types; and
- ★ Reinstate beauty to the Gardens, its planting and landscape.



Opportunities to introduce some areas of wildflowers, while keeping the ornamental, 'pleasure gardens' character:

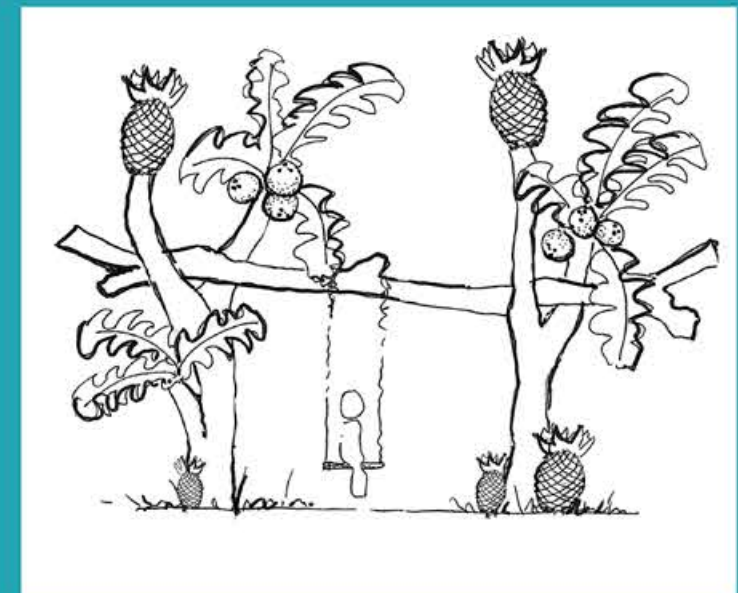


Opportunities for play integrated within a landscape setting

Opportunities to introduce a cafe to serve the park and a revitalised play and activities area, within a beautiful setting



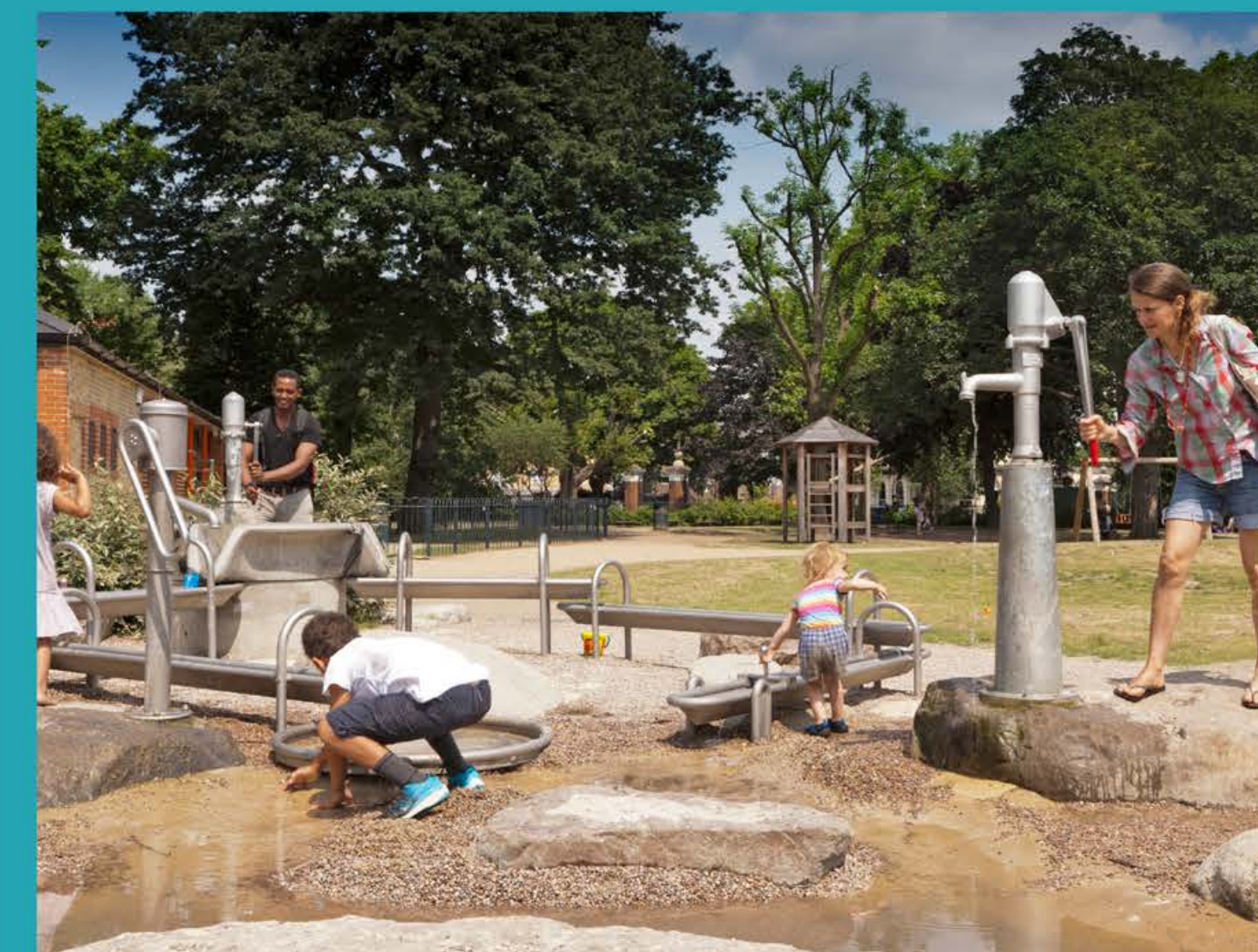
Opportunities to re-introduce activities for all ages, modelled on past historic precedents



Opportunities for making planting diverse and increasing biodiversity value



Opportunities to introduce lost historic features



Opportunities to introduce natural play and simple water, rocks and sand play

SYDNEY GARDENS BATH UPDATE ON PROJECT

The Lottery Funding process so far.

- ★ In August 2016 we submitted the first stage in a bid to the Lottery Fund for £3m, to restore and revitalise Sydney Gardens. These proposals, which were consulted on in 2016, established the main principles for the masterplan and the project.
- ★ BANES Council learnt in 2017 that they were successful in achieving a grant to develop the plans in more detail. They awarded us a grant of £270k to carry out the necessary work in this 'Development Phase', to progress the designs in enough detail for a planning application.
- ★ Work has been progressing since August 2017 to develop these plans, which will be submitted back to the Lottery Fund's Heritage and Big Lottery's 'Parks for People' grant programme, for their approval.
- ★ Our current design development is shown on the following boards, and we welcome your thoughts and suggestions on some key issues, and the plans in general.
- ★ Once the designs and details are finalised, we will submit our proposals, costings and other technical information back to the Lottery Fund, in August 2018, for their approval.

What happens then?

- ★ January 2019: We will find out in January 2019 if we are successful in being awarded the £2.7m grant. If so, and together with contributions from the council, we can proceed in carrying out the restoration and new works, and associated activities.
- ★ From January 2019, we will develop the tender documents, and appoint contractors to carry out the construction and landscape works, and continue the programme of activities.
- ★ Works will then be carried out from 2020, for approximately a year.

How we are using the development grant.

- ★ We have carried out ecology surveys, topographic surveys, tree surveys, building surveys and transport engineering surveys. These are all necessary to inform the current design development.
- ★ Our Community Ranger is working with many local groups to inform the design and future activities and use of the many buildings in the park.

Look at the masterplan and detailed plans to see the changes:

- We have updated the designs to:
- ★ retain 2 lower tennis courts in lieu of the proposed larger play area.
 - ★ a planted labyrinth has moved to enable lower tennis courts to be kept,
 - ★ plans for the buildings and other underused areas in the Gardens have progressed.

How you can get involved with the project:

- ★ Look at this exhibition and please give us your comments. We welcome your feedback on the design development.
- ★ This exhibition will also be in the library for two weeks, and also available to view on our website with the questionnaire online, on the dedicated Consultation page.
- ★ Sign up to our Facebook page @ SydneyGardensBath, to keep up to date with stories, progress and events.
- ★ Join the Friends of Sydney Gardens.
- ★ Suggest ideas for a new Sydney Gardens swing! Or suggest ideas for 'what to do with the Loo?'

Images from the 2016, 2017 consultations on the outline plans.



2016 consultation masterplan.



ACTIVITIES - THE PLEASURE GARDEN



**Bath & North East
Somerset Council**

Alongside the restoration works, a programme of events and activities around art, nature, horticulture, wildlife, play, sport, archaeology and history will take place in the park during the Delivery Phase 2019 to 2021.

In the current design and planning phase, Sue Palmer, the Sydney Gardens Community Ranger, is developing the Activity Plan to be submitted with the grant bid. Sue is meeting and consulting with community groups and organisations, and working closely with the Friends of Sydney Gardens.

From September 2017 to May 2018 a diverse programme of activities are being trialled, in order to test what people would like to see happen in the park in the future. We are hosting learning sessions with local primary schools and young people to develop learning resources, consulting with older people's groups, running training and volunteering activities, organising nature walks and talks, and researching improvements to the park.

Together with the physical improvements, this will enable greater access and inclusivity for people across need and ability, including how to make Sydney Gardens a dementia friendly park.

A small selection of proposed future activities include:

- ★ an 'Illumination' public event;
- ★ play activities for all ages;
- ★ art in the park, small scale performances and concerts – music, drama, story telling;
- ★ self-led learning resources for children and young people;
- ★ nature inspired walks and talks;
- ★ community gardening;
- ★ a programme of wellbeing activities for older people;
- ★ 'Cosmorama' Art and Nature Weekend Festival;
- ★ play, physical and wellbeing activities for all ages;
- ★ These are just some of the proposed activities, get in touch or sign up to our newsletter for more.

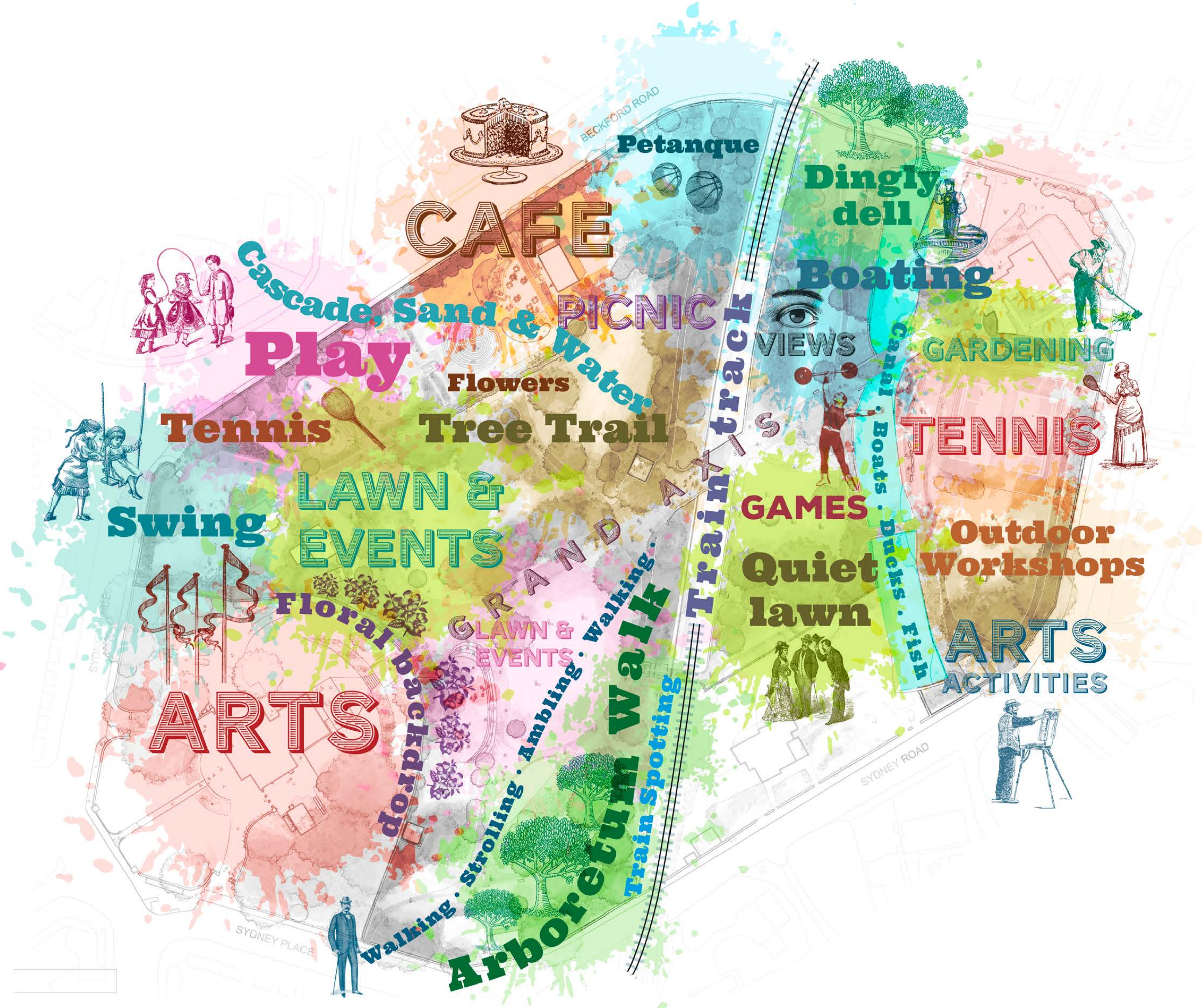
What do YOU think?

What events and activities would you be interested in attending and participating in?

What would inspire you to volunteer in the park?

Ways to be involved:

- ★ Contact Sue Palmer with your ideas and thoughts,
- ★ Sign up to our monthly e-news to receive news of opportunities and events,
- ★ Join the Friends of Sydney Gardens to support the park.



Brief History

Sydney Gardens were laid out as commercial pleasure grounds between 1792 and 1794 following the development of Bathwick by Sir William Pulteney. The initial design was by the architect Thomas Baldwin, but finished by Charles Harecourt Masters in 1794. This plan is shown here. The Gardens were funded by the sale of shares and built on land leased from the local Pulteney family.

The Gardens were opened on 11 May 1795 as the Sydney Gardens Vauxhall, and rapidly became a popular place of entertainment, providing a site for public breakfasts, promenades, and galas.

Sydney Gardens is significant today for many reasons. This board shows the 1794 Plan with the labyrinth shown, and 1904 plan, as well as many historic paintings and sketches.

There are many layers of history still remaining in the gardens today. You can see which parts of the gardens have survived through time by comparing the current plan, on the next board, with these older plans here.

We will be conserving many of the surviving historic features, or making improvements to their setting, as far as our funds allow.

The Labyrinth

The Labyrinth was an original feature of the Georgian Pleasure Gardens in 1795, but was destroyed when the Great Western Railway was built through the gardens in the 1840s. At the centre of the labyrinth was a “Merlin’s Swing” which was thought to be good for your health.

After completing the Labyrinth you exited via a Grotto (now thought to be rebuilt in the grounds of the nearby Bath Spa Hotel). It was said to have been nearly twice as large as the labyrinth at Hampton Court and was enjoyed by Jane Austen when she lived at No. 4 Sydney Place.

Association with famous people

Jane Austen lived in Sydney Place from 1801 to 1804 and frequented Sydney Gardens. We are currently looking at how to incorporate her legacy into the interpretation of the park. One option is a statue but additional funding will have to be raised beyond the lottery funding.

Other options are a ‘plinth’ with a silhouette. We will be creating a Jane Austen trail in the park with the help of the Jane Austen Society.

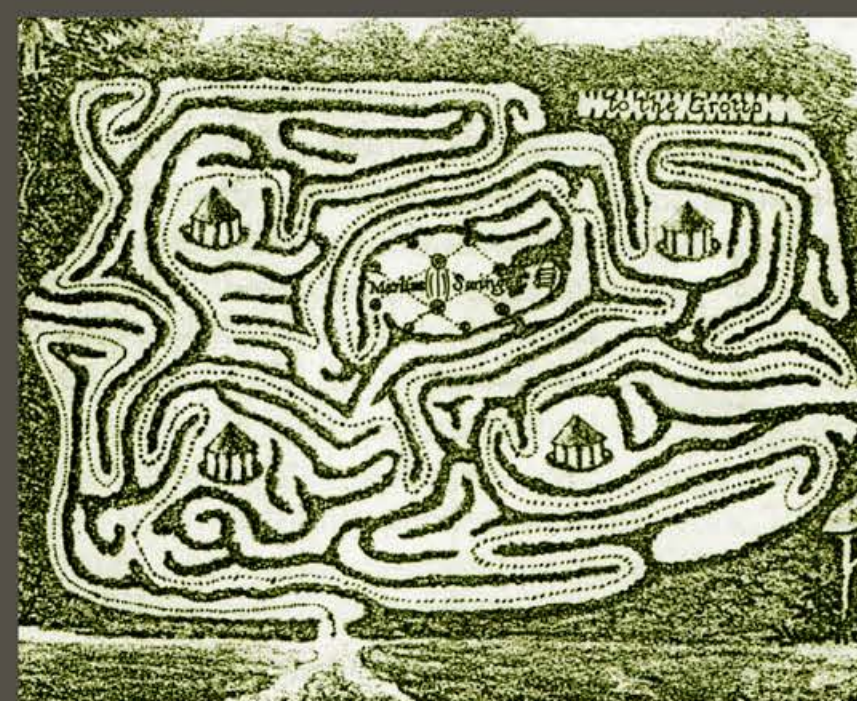
In our interpretation we will also tell the story of the railway and Brunel’s legacy, as well as other designers associated with the Gardens.



1794 Plan of Sydney Gardens, Harecourt Masters



Sketch of the 'Fancy Fair' at Sydney Gardens



The plan for the original maze, a replica of which can be seen at Glendurgan in Cornwall.



Sydney Gardens, Bath, by Samuel Poole, 20th century



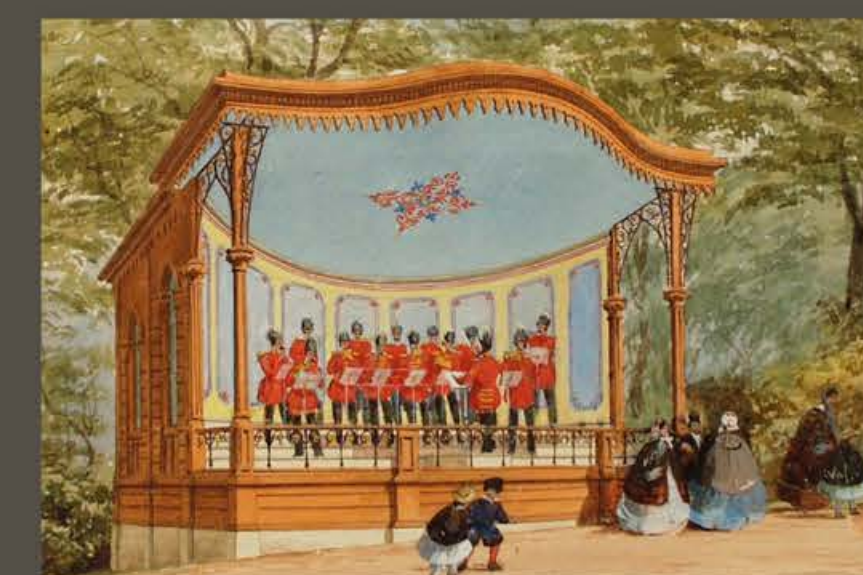
Sydney Gardens, Bath, by John Nixon c. 1800. Standing swings could be re-introduced today?



O.S. Plan 1904. The bandstand is marked as 'The Orchestra' located on the main axis.



'Detached Subjects for a sketch of the Gardens' Sydney Gardens, by John Nixon 1800



The Orchestra, 1931. Located on the main axis set within the planting, as can be seen on the plans above.



Canal Bridge, Sydney Gardens, Bath, by John Nash c.1927

SYDNEY GARDENS BATH

THE GARDENS TODAY

While there are still many positive aspects and the gardens are still a peaceful haven for wildlife with many significant trees, many aspects have declined over the years.

Current Situation

- ★ Historic layers of the landscape have been lost.
- ★ Landscape and horticultural diversity has been eroded & buildings are dilapidated.
- ★ Some of the original layout, views and features have been lost over time, which provides an opportunity to provide information on the past, restoring some where they still survive or possibly recreating some elements, such as the swings or labyrinth.
- ★ Many buildings are not used, or underused. This project gives us the opportunity to make best use of them all, for public benefit.

- Legend: Existing elements
- (A) Existing car park
 - (B) Holburne Museum garden
 - (C) Enclosure
 - (D) Site compound / depot and 'ruin'
 - (E) Train viewing area
 - (F) Railway
 - (G) Stone bridge
 - (H) Iron bridge
 - (I) Kennet and Avon Canal
 - (J) Tennis courts
 - (K) Bowling green
 - (L) Play area
 - (M) Fenced off area / informal allotment

- Legend: Current buildings & structures
- (1) Grade II* listed Two Watchman's Boxes at Holburne Museum
 - (2) Grade II* listed The Holburne Museum
 - (3) Grade II* listed Pavilion/ Gardener's Lodge
 - (4) Grade II* listed Ladies' public lavatories
 - (5) Grade II* listed Gentlemen's public lavatories
 - (6) Public toilets
 - (7) Grade II* listed Minerva's Temple
 - (8) Grade II* listed Bridge over railway in Sydney Gardens
 - (9) Grade II* listed Retaining wall and ballustrade
 - (10) Grade II* listed Retaining wall east of railway line
 - (11) Grade II* listed Footbridge over railway
 - (12) Grade II* listed Sydney Gardens Hotel and Ravenswell
 - (13) Grade II* listed front garden wall to Sydney Gardens Hotel and Ravenswell
 - (14) Grade II* listed wall, railings and gate to the west of the Kennet and Avon Canal
 - (15) Grade II* listed Footbridge over canal in Sydney Gardens
 - (16) Grade II* listed Bridge in Sydney Gardens
 - (17) Grade II* listed Loggia
 - (18) Grade II* listed Sydney House
 - (19) The 'Bothy'
 - (20) Former Bathwick Street Pay Box / Ticket kiosk
- Boundary to Sydney Gardens

Opportunities

- ★ The project will allow us to restore physical heritage, including horticultural aspects and buildings and provide new opportunities for play.
- ★ It will allow the gardens to be in a better condition that is easier to maintain, and increased biodiversity.
- ★ The project will allow an improved programme of activities for all and it will encourage volunteers to be involved.
- ★ The project will allow us to create opportunities for visitors to stay in the Gardens longer, through more diverse range of activities, food & drink, and opportunities for quiet enjoyment.
- ★ Currently there is limited access for schools and for specific disability and mental health groups and we plan to improve this.



Fenced off area should be brought back into park and public use



Many paths in need of repair



Play area located away from any facilities, poor access and limited play value



Depot is located in a key part of the landscape



Access to railway walk is uninviting



Entrance could be more welcoming



Poor state of tennis courts

SYDNEY GARDENS BATH BUILDINGS IN THE PARK

The buildings in the park need new uses to support activities and park related events or they need conservation to their structures.

The two historic Edwardian toilets are listed and on the Heritage at Risk register. Can we find a new use for these? We propose to relocate one from its current position behind the modern toilet block, so it is less hidden and can be better protected and put to positive uses.

The Bowling Pavilion is not currently used, and is in a poor condition so it will not be cost effective to renovate it to current building standards. A new small cafe/kiosk building will help support activities and enjoyment of the park. Further detail is shown on Board 8. The new building can be moved slightly, to create a larger seating terrace, and it can be designed so it addresses both the play area and the rest of park.

There is an existing sub-station in the Gardens maintenance depot, and also a 'ruin' that is now overgrown. It is in the same location as one of the early pleasure garden buildings, the 'Cosmorama' and may contain stone from that earlier structure. It would help the maintenance of the gardens to have a small storage area, and it may be possible to locate this next to the substation.

Both Minerva's Temple and The Loggia are valuable park assets and could be conserved and used for temporary arts and interpretation.

The Bothy can be refurbished to have a new, park related use, as an arts collaboration project with an outdoor workshop. The area can also contain secure storage for gardening activities and volunteers, or for park materials storage.

What do YOU think?

More information on these can be seen on Boards 8 and 9



Edwardian Toilets
Structures have fallen into disrepair and no longer in use



Bowling Green With Bowls Pavilion
Limited use of existing facilities



Opportunities for arts in the park

Kiosk

Gardeners Lodge

Modern Toilets

Gents Edwardian Toilets

Ladies Toilets
Planned to be moved from behind the modern toilets and restored, with a different use.

Minerva's Temple

Loggia

Reservoir

Substation

Potential for small park maintenance storage area



Depot Area
Unightly area in the hart of the park



Minerva's Temple
Stone work, interior and seating in need of repair and restoration. Potential for interpretation use?



Loggia
Stone work, interior and seating in need of repair and restoration. Potential for interpretation, or possible trompe l'oeil on the door?



The 'Bothy'
Currently unused. Potential for arts re-use as workshops

SYDNEY GARDENS BATH

THE NEW MASTERPLAN

LOTTERY FUNDED

Bath & North East
Somerset Council

Since the outline masterplan was first developed in 2016, and again in 2017 some elements have changed again, and designs have been developed further. They are summarised here:

- ★ Two tennis courts (4) are to be retained in the location of the existing three, near the main entrance - in response to concerns from tennis players.
- ★ The layout of the play area (11) around the café (F) has been developed whilst retaining tennis, as shown
- ★ The existing depot adjacent to the rear of the Holburne is proposed to be replaced with a flower border with the 'ruin' a central, garden feature of this
- ★ The area above the cafe (13) has been changed to active play, relocated from the lower (tennis court) area
- ★ The labyrinth has been relocated to the grassed area near the Bothy
- ★ An additional vehicular entrance will not be included in the location of the pedestrian entrance at (8) on the plan.

Legend

- 1 Main entrance - minor restoration
- 2 Improve cottage garden setting of Gardener's Lodge - new planting and seating
- 3 Floral border and seating area
- 4 Tennis courts refurbished to LTA standards, reduced from 3 to 2.
- 5 Improved connection with The Holburne: Railings extended, new floral border against wall.
- 6 Shrub and tree pruning to create clearing where orchestra once stood. Electricity and waterpoints.
- 7 Flower garden and connecting path, in place of existing depot. Ruin stonework consolidated as a garden feature
- 8 Pedestrian entrance and metal gate overthrow - minor conservation
- 9 Footpath adjacent to train line - seating and improved footpath alongside
- 10 Path realignment and restoration of original 1886 long seat
- 11 Play Area: zoned for younger and older children, refer to play area drawings
- 12 New outdoor seating terrace to new café kiosk, with petanque and seating
- 13 Active zone for all ages, refer to play area drawings.
- 14 Entrance re-opened with railings and gate set back within the gardens, to prevent direct access onto road
- 15 New pedestrian access to Sydney Gardens from Beckford Road - with associated road crossing
- 16 Woodland garden created with woodland planting, viewing and seating areas, in existing fenced off area.
- 17 Improved, ramped access to canal tow path
- 18 Labyrinth, based on original guidebook, but planted in grasses
- 19 Refurbished tennis courts
- 20 Potential locations for Jane Austen sculpture (not part of HLF)

Legend: Structures

- A Holburne Museum
- B Gardener's Lodge - no works
- C Listed toilets - Ladies: refurbish, relocate from behind 1980's toilet block to improve setting and restore to alternative use
- D Modern Toilets - Convert rear of the building to new community work-shop facility
- E Listed toilets - Gentlemen: restored to alternative use
- F Bowls Pavilion - converted to cafe kiosk and possibly 'Changing Places' accessible toilet with seating terraces and petanque
- G Minerva's Temple - restored
- H Footbridge - restored
- I Footbridge - restored
- J Bothy - refurbish for 'model of exchange' use
- K Loggia - conserve
- L Small outdoor workshop/ tool store area for Bothy

- ➡ Existing entrance
- ➡ New /reopened entrance



Pedestrian entrance unchanged

What do YOU think?

What comments do you
have on the final plans?

LD&DESIGN

SYDNEY GARDENS BATH

THE PARK CAFÉ

LOTTERY FUNDED

Bath & North East Somerset Council

In our summer 2016 consultation, 78% of people were in favour of a Café in the park, created by the conversion of the Bowls Pavilion. Due to the poor condition of the Bows Pavilion, we will need to rebuild rather than refurbish this building.

The new café kiosk will be on a smaller footprint, providing a small café facility, and meeting point for all the park visitors.

Preliminary café designs show it opening out onto different seating terraces, by siting the building further back from the existing Bowls Pavilion.

It will have full accessibility, with one 'changing places' toilet, be central to the play area and be a meeting point in the park.

What do YOU think?

Would you use a café facility here in the park regularly through all seasons?

Do you have any other comments or suggestions in relation to the café?



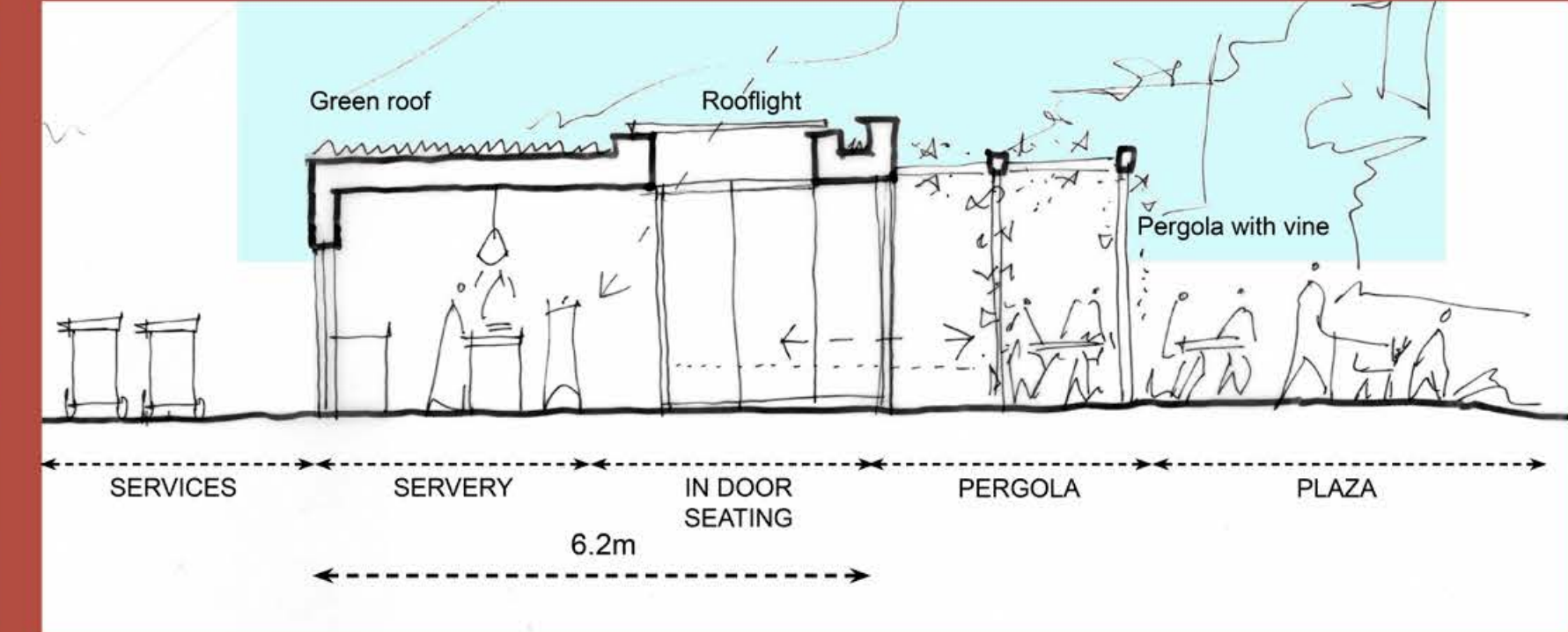
The park café: Proposed location



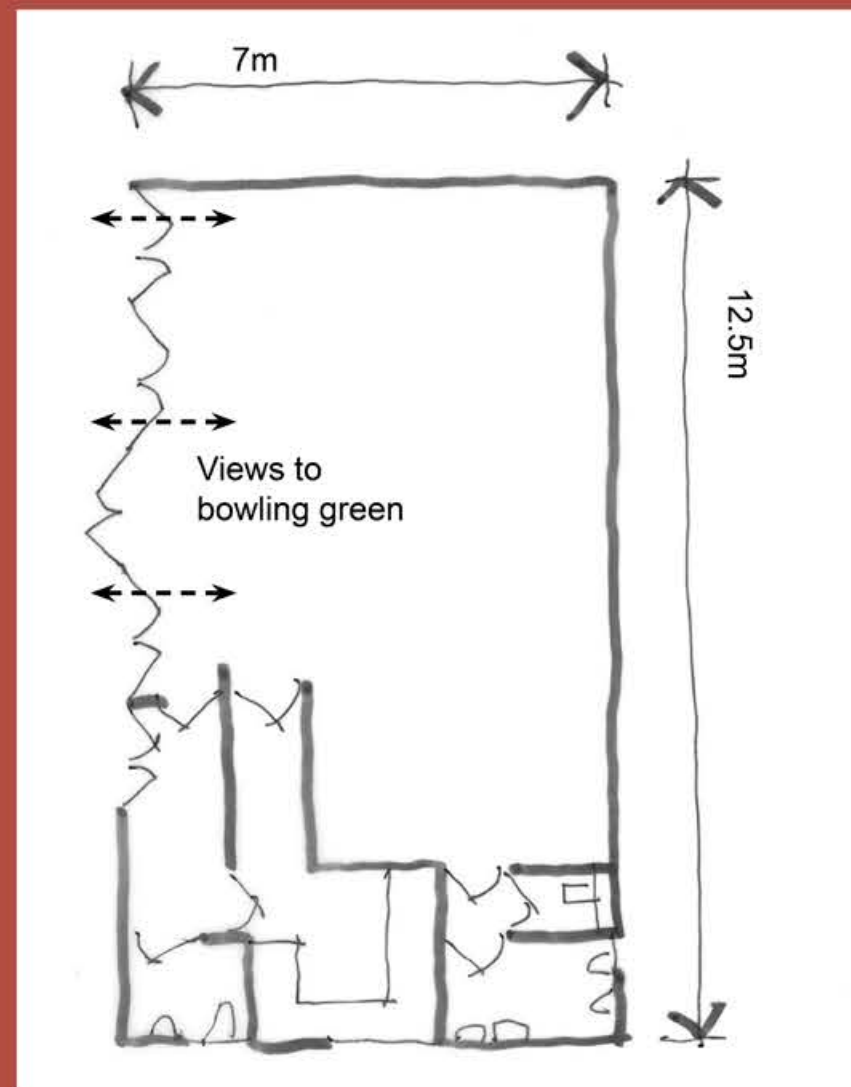
The existing, derelict Bowls Pavilion



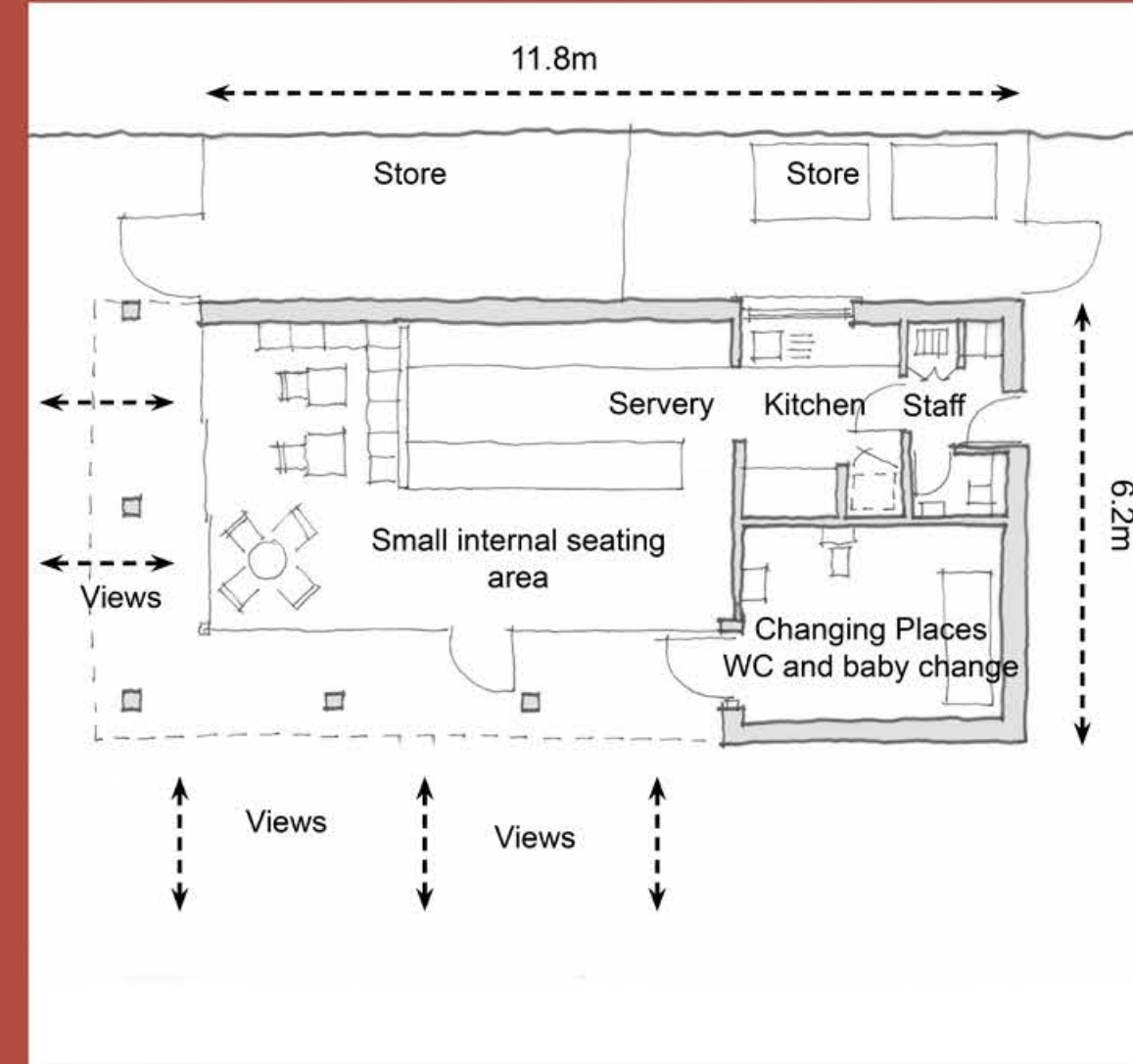
Park café kiosk with seating and planting - example



Sketch section - not to scale



Existing layout



Proposed layout



New café kiosk - links to landscapes to south and west

Existing Bowls Pavilion

Existing footprint = 90 sq.m
1 female toilet
1 male toilet & 2 urinals
Tea kitchen
Associated sheds stores:
Shed 1 - 14.5 sq.m
Shed 2 - 4.5 sq.m
Shed 3 - 4.5 sq.m

Total built area = c. 113.5 sq.m

Proposed Café Kiosk

Footprint = 70sq.m

CAFE with 1 accessible 'Changing Places' toilet and 1 staff toilet.

Kiosk to have external, partly covered pergola structure to give shelter and shade to the courtyard seating area, a bit like the kiosk at Alice Park



Wood interiors



Screens provide security



Pergola to perimeter



Screens control sunlight



Use patterns from Edwardian toilets

SYDNEY GARDENS BATH EDWARDIAN LOOS AND BOTHY

Edwardian Toilets

In our summer 2016 consultation, 72% of people were in favour of the 'refurbishment of the Gents toilet and find an alternative use, and to remove the Ladies toilet'. The ladies is currently hidden behind the modern toilet block. The toilets are Grade II listed and also on Historic England's Heritage at Risk Register, so we are keen to conserve both and find a new use for them. This is a complex issue. We cannot restore the toilets and then leave them with no viable use, hidden behind the modern toilet block.

Options for the Edwardian Toilets

Our preferred option is to relocate the ladies toilets to the other side of the path so it's not hidden by the modern block, and refurbish it to provide a park related use.

One or both could be used as a kiosk, or storage facility. This would mean restoring the buildings and removing the internal fittings. Whether they are kept in the original location, or moved; what should they be used for?

What do YOU think?

Would you support the relocation of the ladies slightly away from the modern block, so its more visible?

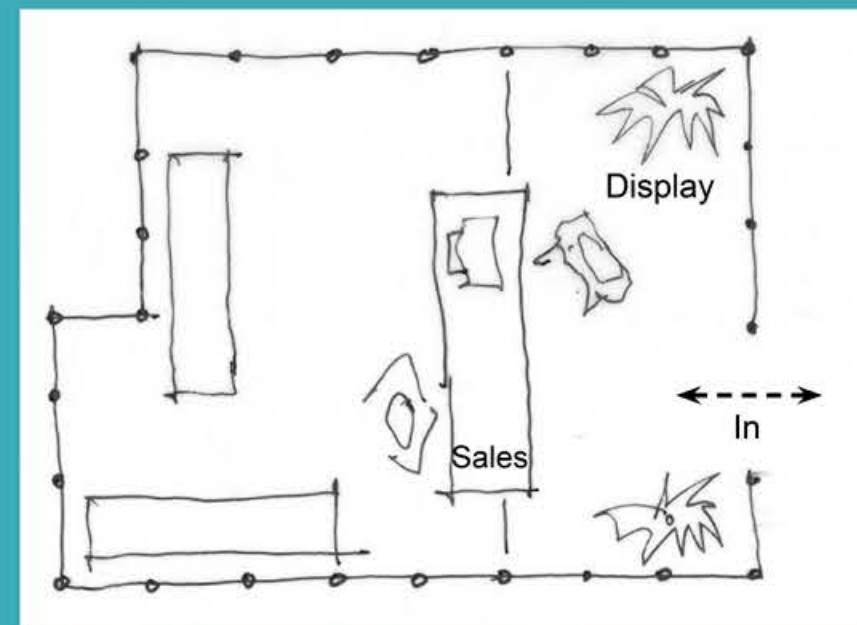
What use can they both have?



Edwardian Toilets as existing



Edwardian Toilets as kiosk



Edwardian Toilets possible layout: as kiosk

EDWARDIAN TOILETS - internal area 20sq. metres

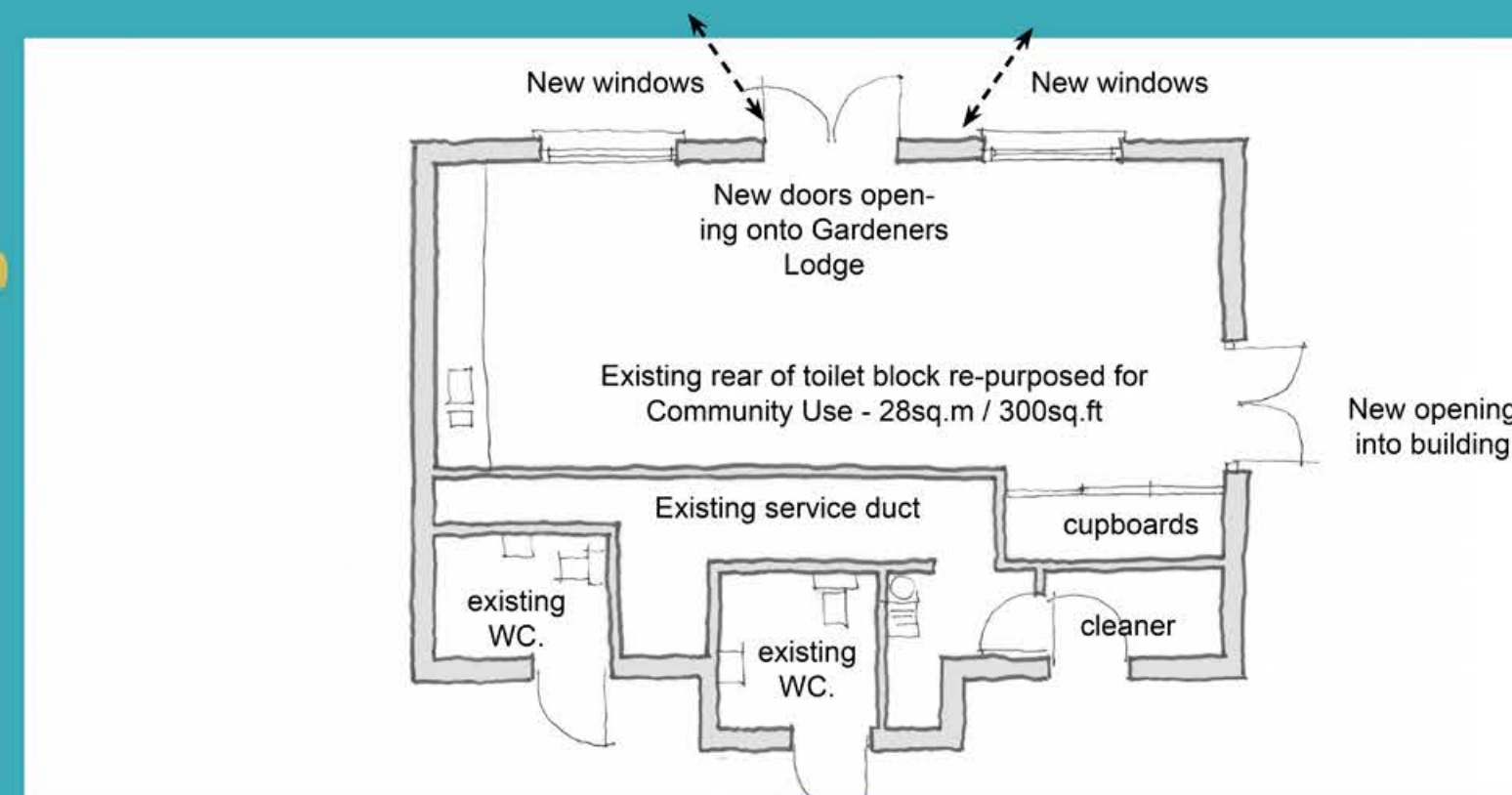
Restore metal work and repaint
 Reglaze roof
 Alter internal partitions subject to approval
 New lighting
 New drainage and water supplies
 New flooring
 New doors

Modern Toilets

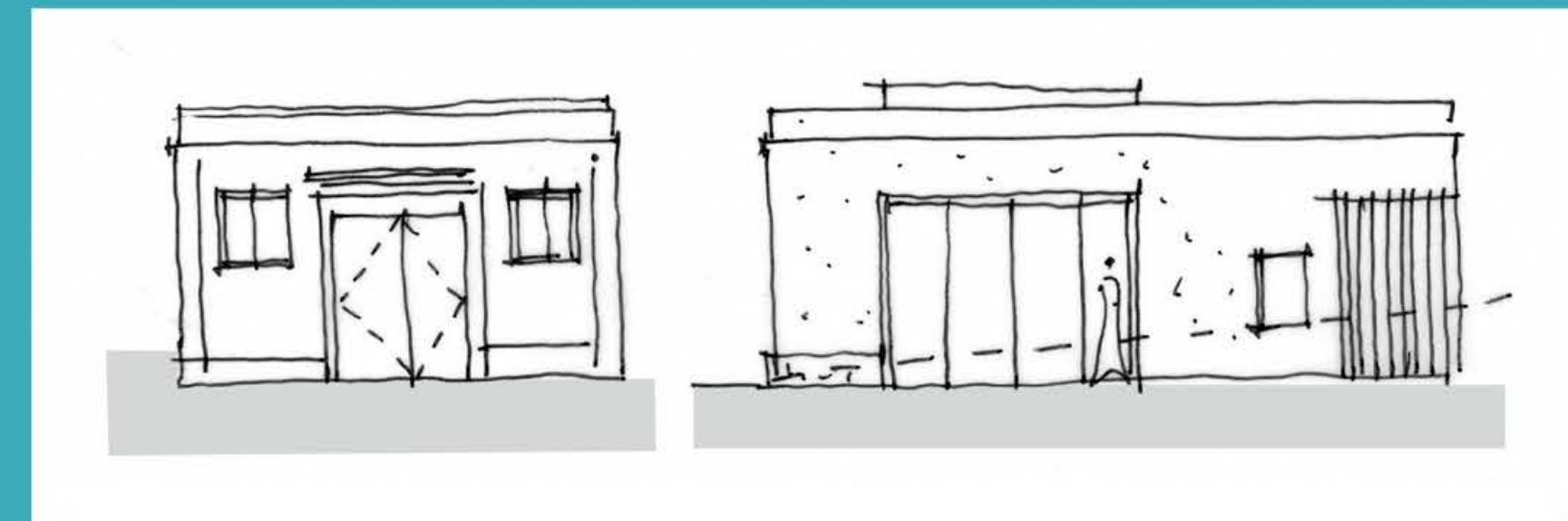
These toilets block the historic, ladies toilets from view, making it difficult to find a new use for them. However, there is a large unused space at the rear of this block, which could be put to good use. We are proposing that this part of the building be converted and used for park related activities with the Holburne Museum.



Existing Toilets with unused area at the rear

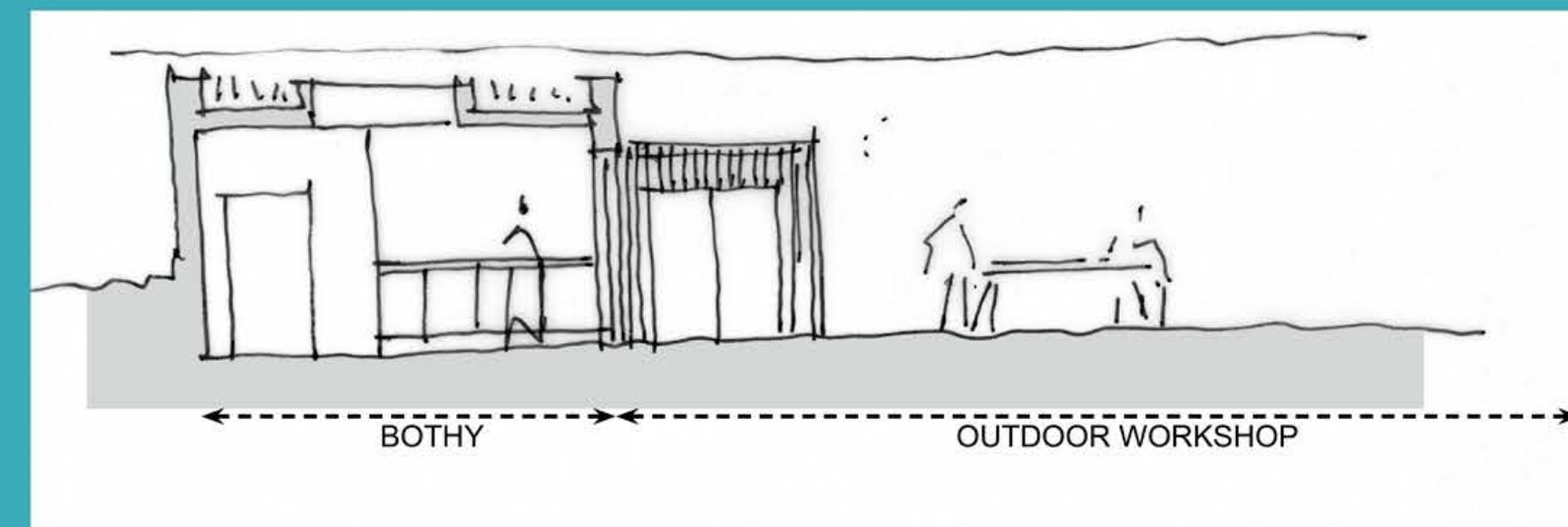


Existing Toilets - showing a possible use of the rear room by creating new doors and windows at the back



Bothy - entrance elevation

Bothy - elevation to outside workshop area



Bothy - cross section



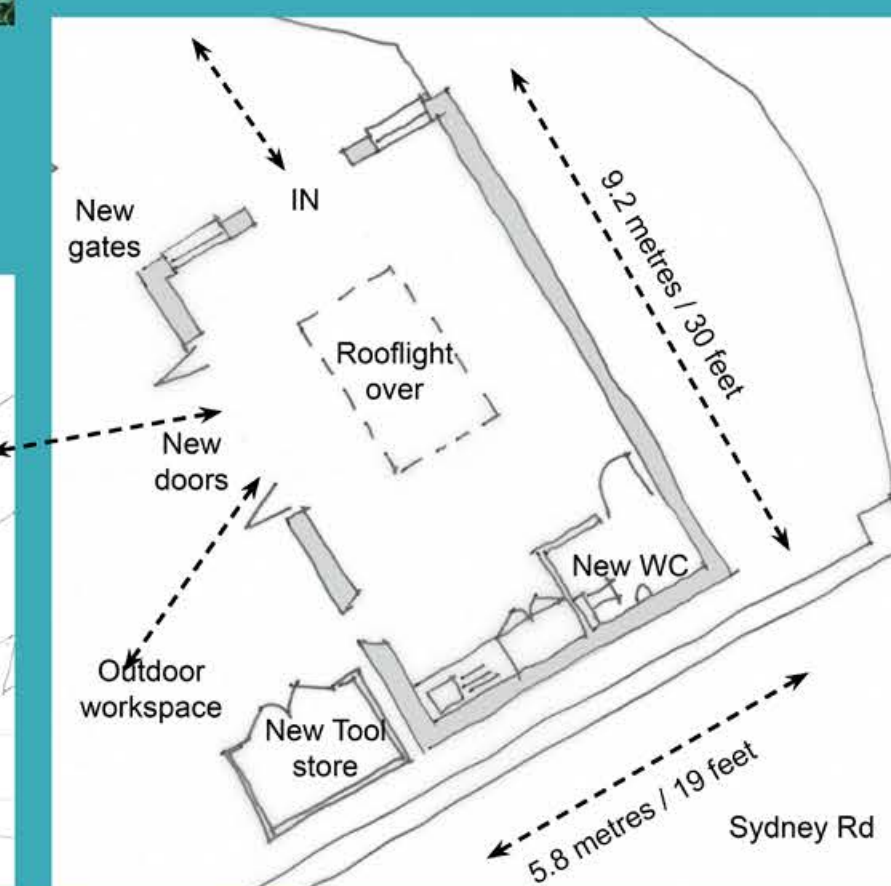
Bothy - front elevation as existing

BOTHY - internal area 46sq.metres

Open up windows to front of building and new roof light
 New side door opening to link to garden
 Accessible toilet
 Sinks, including a work sink
 Heating system, Electricity and other utilities
 Lockable storage inside
 Overshadowing Yew and Holly trees removed
 Scrub cleared on southwest side of building to create outdoor workspace
 Green roof / Solar panelling (subject to studies)
 External tool store



Bothy - proposed entrance elevation



Bothy - plan

The 'Bothy'

The Bothy was built as an electricity substation around 1931. In recent years the Bothy has been used for storage and a maintenance base for the on-site gardener. The gardener is no longer based on-site, but the building is still used for storage of some equipment, but generally under-used.

Proposed future use:

Our aim is for the Bothy to be a key facility in widening participation and learning in the park, for play, learning, the arts and well-being, through a 'model of exchange'. It would provide an affordable and usable space for a 2-3 year residency of an artist collective, in exchange for enabling and delivering a free programme of activities for park users.

A further opportunity exists for the area to the southwest side of the Bothy, currently overgrown and unused. It could be used as an outside workshop area, in conjunction with the bothy, for many kinds of groups.

What do YOU think?

Do you support the re-use of the Bothy for an 'Exchange' programme to develop further creative activities within the gardens?

Do you have any other ideas for uses?

SYDNEY GARDENS BATH

NEW PLAY AREA

The story so far

In our summer 2016 consultation, 94% of people were in favour of a new play area located nearer to main entrance with a labyrinth, sand and water play features.

The lower tennis courts are now proposed to be retained and refurbished to LTA standards, from 3 to 2 courts.

The design has developed from the last consultation, with the younger children's play nearest the café, older play in the adjacent area and active play and mini ball games proposed for the upper terrace, above the café kiosk and seating terrace.

Petanque is also proposed for the café seating terrace.

As the existing site is terraced, the designs have progressed to make best use of the slopes for play and park activities, while also being fully accessible.

The labyrinth has now moved to near the tennis courts at the top of the gardens, and proposed to be made from tall grasses, approx 75cm ht.

What do YOU think?

