

Notes from Polish Church Garden get together

27th October 2019

Attendees

Local Residents; Claire, Anna, Elieen, Doreen, and Debbie
Green team; John, Alexa, Sally, Keith
Photography; Jim

Aim of get together

The aim of this get together was to discuss ideas for the garden and get a majority agreement on plans for the area and discuss next steps. Key areas of discussion are in sections below.

Church Footprint

- A solid base to act as a footprint for the church, using natural materials if possible
 - A cross at the back of the footprint
 - Raised beds or planters
 - Seating
 - Information board telling the story of the church and people connected to the site
 - Example drawings of what this might look like were shared - see attached diagram
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Wild and mown areas

- The wild copse area encompassing the yew tree, native deciduous trees and newly planted saplings to be kept and maintained
 - The "lumpy" area of grass on the far eastern corner to be left as meadow and mown once or twice towards the end of each summer
 - The area in front of the church, bordering the post and rail fence and houses and out towards the wild areas is to be mown regularly - marked as rough grass on attached diagram
 - A question was raised as to whether there are Polish national plants that could be incorporated into the garden (Note: the Polish national flower is the corn poppy (*Papaver rhoeas*) – the red annual poppy that should be easy to cultivate given the right conditions).
 - A suggestion that a large area of the garden be landscaped and re-planted was raised. The majority were against this idea as over 50 plant species have been catalogued at the site and the area is relatively flat as is
 - The suggestion of letting sheep graze the area was made. The majority of local residents were not keen on this idea due to the flies, dogs in gardens that connect to the site and it limiting the use of the space by others.
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Fences

- Attendees were happy with the fences as they are
- If the back fence is to be replaced, we agreed it should be with something similar to the existing fence, keeping gaps for wildlife
- The current post and rail fence on the north-west edge is well liked
- The signs that have been put up are felt to be intrusive on the peaceful nature of the site
- A suggestion of a painted mural was made, the majority felt that letting plants grow over the fences would be a preferable idea

Trees

- Overhanging evergreen trees on the north-west boundary beside the post and rail fence should have overhanging branches trimmed back. But not be cut down
- There was discussion on what the plans were for the leylandii along the back fence on Coombe Park land. Locals report seeing plenty of wildlife using them and are happy for them to be left
- Discussions were had about putting up bat boxes, owl boxes etc in the trees

Pre school forest school

- Claire mentioned that she's training to be a forest school leader for the village pre school and that they would love to use the space.
- They can get involved in some tasks to look after the garden as well as tasks like bat boxes and planting etc
- Setting up a small bird hide was discussed favourably

Miscellaneous items

- We plan to re use the rubble from the site into the church footprint if possible
- A sign to say where the garden is would be useful near the village hall

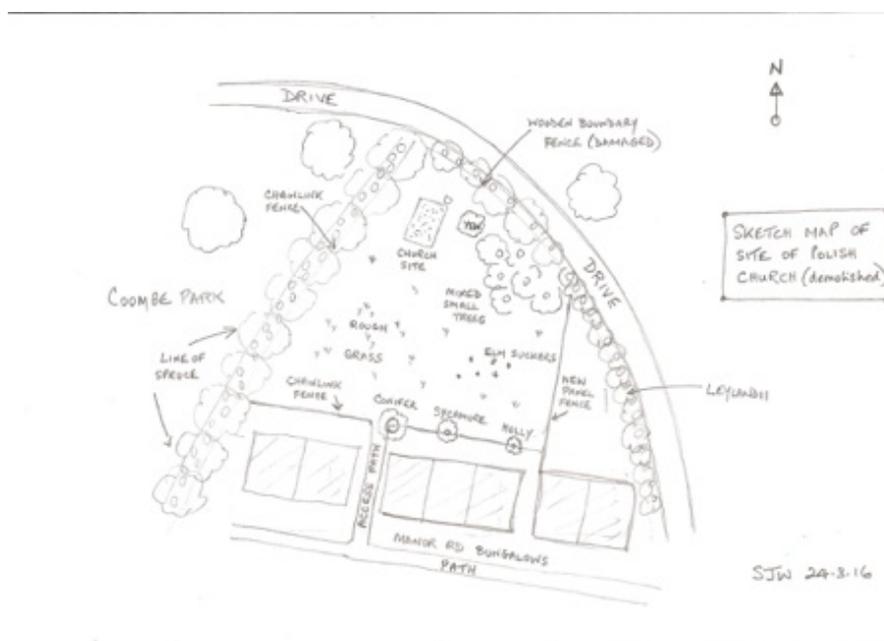
Next steps

- Get quotes and design ideas for the work on the church footprint
- Get the grass area we agreed to be mown ASAP
- Get together in January/February to plant trees
- Alexa to keep everyone updated on progress!

Maintenance tasks completed

- Remove ragwort
- Remove brambles from yew tree
- Check and adjust guards on newly planted trees
- Clear grass areas of debris

Drawing of site from 2016 for reference



Ideas for the church footprint

