



PRESS RELEASE

17.07.2020 – For Immediate Release

ST JOHN'S CHURCHYARD RE-OPENS FOLLOWING UPGRADE WORKS

St John's Churchyard has re-opened following a programme of upgrade works to the Park, carried out by Potters Fields Park Management Trust.

The improvements include newly planted wildflower and wetlands beds designed to attract wildlife and enhance biodiversity; the children's play area houses two insect hotels and a magnifying glass for young nature lovers to enjoy. The playground also includes new swings, balance boards, 'wobbly bridges' and a climbing frame with slide.

For those who have outgrown swings and slides, there is a boules/petanque pitch and an outdoor table tennis table; both are free to use, and people can bring their own equipment and play at any time.

The spacious lawns continue to offer plenty of room for exercise, dog-walking and relaxation, with shady spots under the trees and some new seating providing respite from the sun.

A small community allotment bed will enable local residents to grow their own vegetables (from 2021).

In 2019, the Trust also completed restoration of the Grade II-listed railings, dating from the 1780s-1830s, along the Fair Street boundary. The Park offers plenty to interest historians; over the centuries, St. John's Churchyard has served as pasture for grazing horses, fairground, martial yard for militia men, parish burial ground and recreation space. The Hawksmoor church of St. John Horselydown, completed in 1733, was bombed during World War II, with only the original plinth now remaining. The Park's history is referenced in a public artwork by artist Gary Breeze (commissioned when the Park was last upgraded by Southwark Council in 2004); fragments of historical passages inlaid in slabs throughout the Park piece together to provide an insight into its rich past.

Sheila Benjamin, Chief Executive of Potters Fields Park Management Trust, said,

"We're very pleased to have finished our long-planned improvements to St. John's Churchyard at a time when the benefits of nature, outdoor recreation and space for reflection have never been more important. We know how precious this community park is to local people and plan to celebrate the re-opening with them properly in the not-too-distant future. In the meantime, we hope that residents, local workers and visitors enjoy the revitalised St. John's Churchyard to the full."

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For further information, please contact:

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Note to editors:**Project team:**

Architect: Dannatt Johnson Architects

Landscape Architect/Design: D4P

Main contractor: *idverde*

Potters Fields Park Management Trust:

Potters Fields Park and St. John's Churchyard are managed by Potters Fields Park Management Trust, a not-for-profit organisation. The Board of Directors comprises representatives of the following local organisations:

- Fair Community Housing Services
- The Greater London Authority
- More London Development Limited
- Shad Thames Residents Association
- Southwark Council
- Team London Bridge

The Trust was set up in 2005 to manage and maintain Potters Fields Park and took on the management of St. John's Churchyard in 2017. Income for the maintenance of both parks is mainly generated from the hiring out of Potters Fields Park for events on a limited number of days a year.

Location of St. John's Churchyard:

Tower Bridge Road, SE1 2AH; entrances on Tooley Street, Fair Street and Druid Street.

Bus: 47, 343, 381 (Tooley Street), 42, 78, 188 (Tower Bridge Road).

Tube/rail: London Bridge.

<https://pottersfields.co.uk/>