

Case Study:

St Luke's Park

Location: Runwell, Essex

Site Type: Service charge

Size size: 15ha/600+properties

Site Take on: 2019

About St Luke's Park

St. Luke's Park is an attractive new community with a rich infrastructure of communal open spaces. The green space has been developed to create a great place for residents to fulfil a whole range of shared functions such as providing safe pedestrian and cycle access routes, allowing for sustainable drainage and creating leisure and social opportunities, all for community benefit.

History

The development of St Luke's Park is built on the former grounds of Runwell Hospital, and elements of the site's history are still visible, with a grade II listed chapel and 'The Lodge' buildings remaining on site.



The church interior has been transformed into modern flats, as shown above. The Lodge, which is on the approach road to St Luke's is still used as NHS offices and was recently turned into a temporary Covid-19 vaccination hub.

DELIVERING CHARITABLE OUTCOMES

ENVIRONMENT AND BIODIVERSITY

The Trust currently manages green space on the approach road into the site and on phases one and two of St Luke's Park. There will be three further phases of land to come under the Trust's management over the next few years. However the current land we manage includes a number of SuDS which serve a variety of purposes on the site. Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) are designed to be functional, fully integrated elements of green infrastructure, and are now increasingly important parts of new developments.

They were introduced to address concerns regarding surface water flooding resulting from increased urban development. However SUDS also deliver multiple environmental benefits. In addition to managing flows, volumes, and diffuse pollution some components (particularly vegetated or landscaped features) can positively impact air quality and reduce carbon.

There are also plans to install bat houses, bird boxes and bug hotels to enhance the biodiversity on site.



COMMUNITY AND SOCIAL COHESION

Since beginning management at St Luke's Park we have held a number of open forum resident meetings to discuss our management of the public open spaces within the development. This led to the formation of a Resident's Working Group which meets regularly with the Land Trust's Community Engagement Officer to discuss the maintenance of the green spaces. We also liaised with the Residents' Working Group when we decided to change contractor. We now have a contractor that the residents are very pleased with and their input was important and valuable when it came to making the final decision and appointing a new contractor.

We have an excellent relationship with the local sports club and have used their space to host a number of meetings with residents.

EDUCATION AND LEARNING

We have been working with students from Writtle University College and they have designed an area of public open space within St Luke's Park and we are planning to run a similar project in the future. There is also a school planned for the development which will provide a range of opportunities for us in the future.

HEALTH AND WELLBEING

The green spaces within St Luke's Park are popular with walkers, runners and cyclists.

There is a sports club located on the approach road to St Luke's, which we have been building a relationship with since we took the neighbouring green space on.

When restrictions lift, we plan to work with residents and the sports club to plan health walks and sports activities for children during the summer holidays.

ECONOMIC VITALITY

We use local contractors on site to manage the public open spaces within St Luke's Park. We're building partnerships with the local businesses around the site, such as the sports club, with the aim of encouraging the new community to utilise the resources around them for their own benefit, and for the local economy.

If you would like any further information about the work we do at St Luke's Park please contact Land Trust Estates Manager Lauren Hull at laurenhull@thelandtrust.org.uk

