



Halstead Heritage Park - an alternative vision

Heritage Zone

The site contains the largest surviving group of World War II air raid shelters in Essex, built for the protection of industrial workers. They are of a type not known elsewhere in the County so may well be the last remaining examples. In recognition of their importance the shelters have been included on the local list of undesignated heritage assets although 9 of the 16 shelters are protected from demolition and alteration as curtilage buildings for the Grade II Listed Factory Terrace.

With the shelters part of the Courtaulds legacy and Halstead's Heritage, this area is the ideal setting for celebrating the history of Halstead and using the structures for the benefit of the present day community and preserving them for future generations.

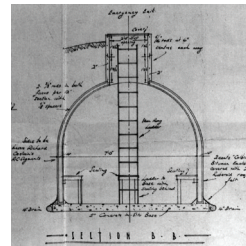


School lessons continue down the shelter, circa 1940. Location unknown but similar to the above ground shelter that survives on site.

Our aspiration is to restore as many of the shelters as feasible that would then be used to accommodate various heritage and community projects.

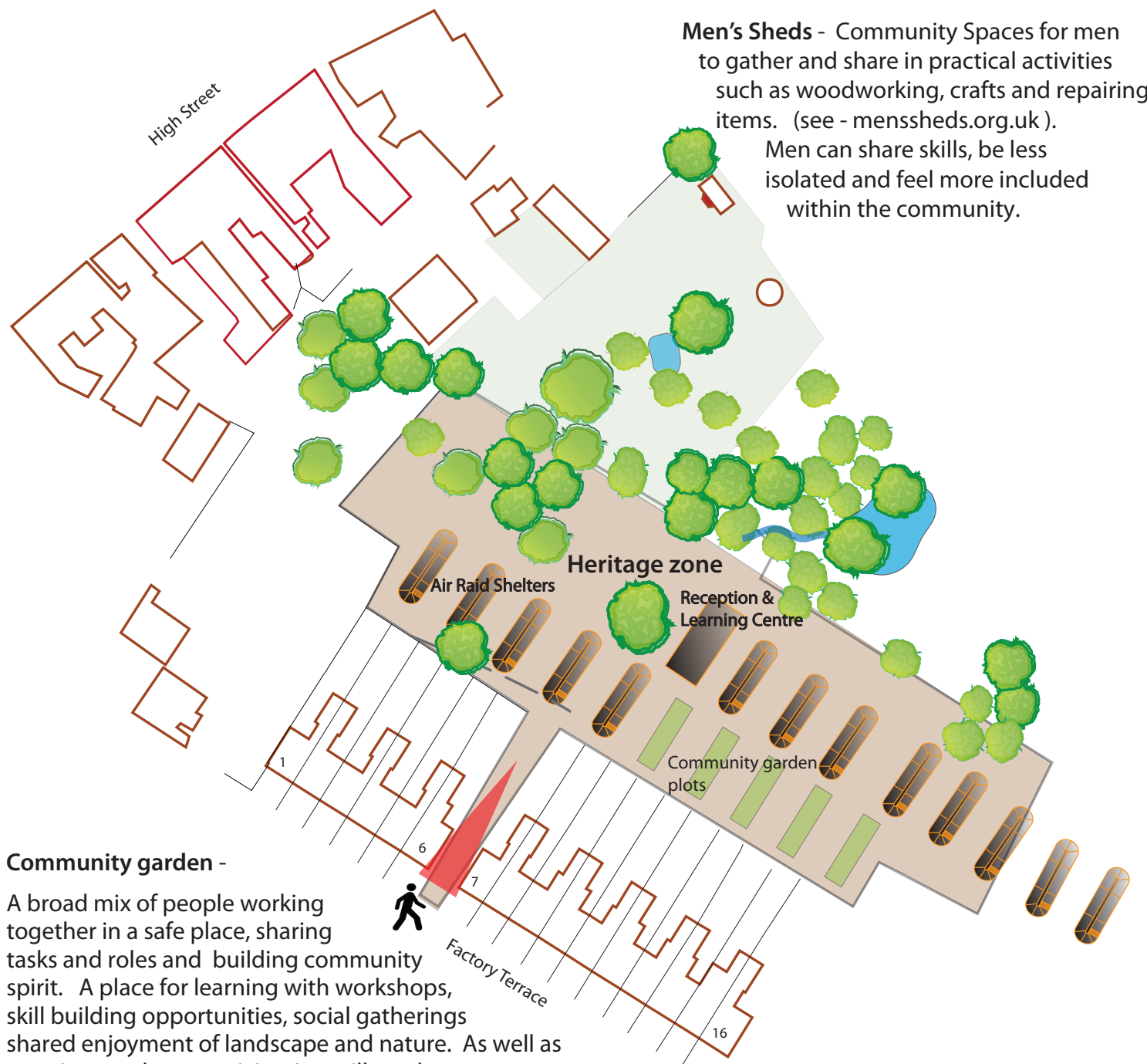
For example, one of the air raid shelters would be set out as it would have been during World War II. Local volunteers would manage this educational and visitor resource, signposting other places of interest within the town.

The shelters would also be used to home community projects, these could include storage for the community allotments and woodlands, the focus would be on projects that would help with educational, social and environmental aspirations and focus on companionship, physical and mental well being.



Air Raid Shelter construction drawing for the Courtauld site circa 1939





Men's Sheds - Community Spaces for men to gather and share in practical activities such as woodworking, crafts and repairing items. (see - menssheds.org.uk). Men can share skills, be less isolated and feel more included within the community.

Community garden -

A broad mix of people working together in a safe place, sharing tasks and roles and building community spirit. A place for learning with workshops, skill building opportunities, social gatherings shared enjoyment of landscape and nature. As well as growing produce, participation will produce companionship, educational and environmental outcomes.

More information

This short paper is one of 4 similar reports on some elements of the Alternative Vision. The others in the series are in regard to the Play Haven, the proposed housing and the Wildlife Zone.

You can read more about the Heritage Zone suggested as part of this project as well as the other topics on Halstead 21st Century Group's website:

halstead21stcentury.org.uk

Dates for future meetings of the Group are posted on the website. All are welcome and attendance is free.

You can email Halstead 21st Century Group with comments and ideas at:

info@halstead21stcentury.org.uk

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